

# Open Research Online

---

The Open University's repository of research publications and other research outputs

## Use of Drawings and Reflective Comments in Family Construct Development

### Thesis

#### How to cite:

Giles, Lucille Dorrean (2004). Use of Drawings and Reflective Comments in Family Construct Development. PhD thesis. The Open University.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© 2004 Lucille Dorrean Giles

Version: Version of Record

---

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

---

[oro.open.ac.uk](http://oro.open.ac.uk)

**USE OF DRAWINGS AND REFLECTIVE COMMENTS**

**IN FAMILY CONSTRUCT DEVELOPMENT**

Lucille Dorrean Giles

B.A., University of British Columbia

M.A., University of British Columbia

Degree for which Thesis offered: Ph.D.

Social Sciences: Psychology

Open University

Date of Submission: 2003

Submission date: 15 August 2003  
Award date: 4 February 2004

ProQuest Number: C816529

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest C816529

Published by ProQuest LLC (2019). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am grateful to Rudi Dallos, Robert Ley and Dorothy Miell, my Ph.D. committee members for their guidance and support throughout this research. I also acknowledge the support and encouragement of my family, especially my husband, Tony, and my sons, Gordon, James, Randy and Stephen. Particular gratitude goes to my parents, who started me on this path.

Sincere appreciation is also extended to Tannis MacBeth and other friends and colleagues, who assisted and encouraged me over many years. Special thanks go to the research families who allowed me into their homes and their lives.



## ABSTRACT

Family drawings, reflective comments, and observations of associated interactions amongst family members were used to develop shared family constructs. Previous research by Kelly (1955) proposed that constructs guide an individual's thoughts and actions; later Procter (1981) and Dallos (1991) demonstrated that verbal responses within a family aid in the development of family constructs.

The current research improves on shortcomings of previous construct development methods, and makes new contributions to Personal Construct Theory by using meanings found in family members' drawings. This comprehensive method was found to be simple, effective and non-threatening for all family members and allowed everyone an equal opportunity to portray their family and develop constructs relating to it.

Illustrations done by the families and the process through which their constructs were formed and analyzed are included. A phenomenological analysis of the collective constructs resulted in the major family themes of Connection to Family of Origin, Family Values, Family Structures, Family's Everyday Concerns, and Management of Change. These construct-based themes were shown to be relevant to the recent literature on families' functioning. Results of this research suggest that using family members' drawings and reflective comments as a method to develop shared family constructs could improve assessment techniques for family therapy.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
ABSTRACT	3
CONTENTS	4
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	7
INTRODUCTION	9
CHAPTER I: THE FAMILY	11
1.1 Working Definition of the Family	11
1.2 Descriptions of the Family	11
1.3 Families as a Focus of Study	11
1.4 Family Therapies	13
1.5 Family Therapy of Choice	16
CHAPTER II: PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY	18
2.1 Development of Personal Construct Psychology	20
2.2 Families and Personal Construct Psychology	21
2.3 Methodological Considerations in Personal Construct Psychology	24
CHAPTER III: DRAWINGS AND REFLECTIONS	27
3.1 Origin of Drawings	28
3.1.1 Drawings in Clinical Settings	29
3.1.2 Drawings in Art Therapy	30
3.1.3 Drawings in Psychological Assessments	34
3.1.4 Drawings in Family Therapies	34
3.2 Use of Reflections with Drawings	40
3.2.1 Applicability of Drawings and Reflections to Personal Construct Psychology	42
CHAPTER IV: AIMS AND GUIDING PROPOSITIONS	44
CHAPTER V: METHOD	45
5.1 Stages of Research	45
5.2 Orientation	46
5.3 Design	46
5.4 Participants	48
5.5 Materials	49
5.6 Procedure	49
5.7 First Family Session	49
5.8 Post-Session Analysis: Perceiver-Element Grid and Construct Development	50
5.9 Subsequent Family Session	51
5.10 Scale Analysis	51
5.11 Theme Analysis	53
CHAPTER VI: RESULTS	56
6.1 An Overview of Family Analysis: One Family's Results	58
6.1.1 Thompson Family	58
Thompson Family Scribble Drawings	58
Thompson Family Drawings	60

Thompson Family Construct Development	61
Thompson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	63
Thompson Family Scale Analysis Summary	66
6.1.2 Across-Families Analysis	67
6.2 Within-Family: Nine Families' Results	68
6.2.1 Robertson Family	68
Robertson Family Scribble Drawings	68
Robertson Family Drawings	68
Robertson Family Construct Development	69
Robertson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	69
Robertson Family Scale Analysis Summary	75
6.2.2 Gibson Family	75
Gibson Family Scribble Drawings	75
Gibson Family Drawings	76
Gibson Family Construct Development	77
Gibson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	77
Gibson Family Scale Analysis Summary	81
6.2.3 Ball Family	82
Ball Family Scribble Drawings	82
Ball Family Drawings	82
Ball Family Construct Development	82
Ball Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	83
Ball Family Scale Analysis Summary	87
6.2.4 Whitney Family	88
Whitney Family Scribble Drawings	88
Whitney Family Drawings	89
Whitney Family Construct Development	89
Whitney Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	97
Whitney Family Scale Analysis Summary	97
6.2.5 Rosen Family	97
Rosen Family Scribble Drawings	98
Rosen Family Drawings	98
Rosen Family Construct Development	98
Rosen Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	99
Rosen Family Scale Analysis Summary	102
6.2.6 Williams Family	103
Williams Family Scribble Drawings	103
Williams Family Drawings	104
Williams Family Construct Development	104
Williams Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	104
Williams Family Scale Analysis Summary	107
6.2.7 Badgley Family	108
Badgley Family Scribble Drawings	108
Badgley Family Drawings	108
Badgley Family Construct Development	109
Badgley Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	109
Badgley Family Scale Analysis Summary	112
6.2.8 Samson Family	112
Samson Family Scribble Drawings	113
Samson Family Drawings	113
Samson Family Construct Development	114
Samson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	114
Samson Family Scale Analysis Summary	118
6.2.9 Langdon Family	118
Langdon Family Scribble Drawings	118
Langdon Family Drawings	118
Langdon Family Construct Development	120
Langdon Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs	120
Langdon Family Scale Analysis Summary	128
6.3 Across-Families Results	129

6.3.1 Shared Family Construct Scale Analysis	129
6.3.2 Shared Family Construct Theme Analysis	129
6.3.3 General Family Themes	129
6.3.4 Major Family Themes	129
6.4 Theme Analysis: Representative Extracts and Illustrations	132
6.4.1 Connection to Family of Origin	132
6.4.2 Family Values	134
6.4.3 Family Structure	137
6.4.4 Family's Everyday Concerns	140
6.4.5 Management of Change	143
CHAPTER VII: DISCUSSION	146
7.1 Relationship of Family Themes to Families in General	147
7.1.1 Connection to Family of Origin	147
7.1.2 Family Values	148
7.1.3 Family Structure	149
7.1.4 Family Everyday Concerns	150
7.1.5 Management of Change	151
7.2 Summary	153
7.2.1 Methodological Critique	154
7.2.2 Reflective Critique	157
7.2.3 Clinical Applications	157
CONCLUSION	159
REFERENCES	160
APPENDIX A: Research Participant's Consent Form	173
APPENDIX B: Thompson Family Tables and Figures	174
APPENDIX C: Table of Means of Family Placement Scores	187
APPENDIX D: Figures of General Family Themes	188
APPENDIX E: Figures of Percentages of Major Family Themes	193

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 5.1: Stages of research in family sessions	45
Figure 5.2: Theme analysis within- and across-families	53
Figure 6.1: Stages of analysis within- and across-families	56
Figure 6.2: Planet	59
Figure 6.3: The Actor	60
Figure 6.4: Acting Colors	60
Figure 6.5: My Father's Shade	61
Figure 6.6: My Family	62
Figure 6.7: Percentages of major family themes in the Thompson family	67
Figure 6.8: The Robertson Family	69
Figure 6.9: Family Characters	76
Figure 6.10: Us	83
Figure 6.11: Rainbow Mushroom	88
Figure 6.12: Path in the Park	99
Figure 6.13: The Weighted Angel on Wheels	103
Figure 6.14: Family: Carson and I, a Spiritual Path	108
Figure 6.15: Our Family at Spanish Banks	113
Figure 6.16: The Lost Family	119
Table 6.1: General and Major Family Themes Across-families	130
Figure 6.17: Percentages of major family themes across families	130
Figure 6.18: Relationships between major family themes and associated issues	131
Figure 6.19: The Big Family	132
Figure 6.20: Gibson's Family Flag	135
Figure 6.21: The Langdon's Family Structure	137
Figure 6.22: Circus	140
Figure 6.23: Change	144
Table B5.1: Thompson Family's Construals in Clinic Drawings and Behaviours	174
Table B5.2: Analysis of Thompson Family's Construals in Clinic Drawings and Behaviours	175
Table B5.3: Emergent Constructs of Thompson Family's Construals	175
Table B5.4: Legend for Scale Analysis of Family Constructs	176
Table B5.5: Thompson Family's Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 1	177
Table B5.6: Thompson Family's Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 2	177
Table B5.7: Thompson Family's Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 3	177
Table B5.8: Thompson Family's Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 4	178

Table B5.9: Thompson Family's Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 5	178
Table B5.10: Thompson Family's Associations, Constructs and Preliminary Themes	179
Table B5.11: Thompson Family's General and Preliminary Themes	183
Table B5.12: Thompson Family's General Themes and Issues	185
Figure B6.1: Thompson family: Spontaneous drawing by Nancy "untitled"	186
Figure B6.2: Thompson family: Spontaneous drawing by Nancy "untitled"	186
Table C6.1: Means of Family Placement Scores on Shared Family Construct 1-4 Scales	187
Figure D6.1: Gibson family: Family drawing by Father entitled "Being Together"	188
Figure D6.2: Gibson family: Family drawing by Matt entitled "Family of Heros"	188
Figure D6.3: Ball family: Spontaneous drawing by Charlene "untitled"	189
Figure D6.4: Rosen family: Family drawing by April entitled "Family"	189
Figure D6.5: Whitney family: Family drawing by Mandy entitled "Family Flower"	190
Figure D6.6: Whitney family: Family drawing by Mac entitled "Body and Soul"	191
Figure D6.7: Badgley family: Family drawing by Carson entitled "Family Picture"	192
Figure D6.8: Samson family: Family drawing by Hedy entitled "Gidiup"	192
Figure E6.1: Percentages of major family themes in Robertson family.	193
Figure E6.2: Percentages of major family themes in Gibson family.	193
Figure E6.3: Percentages of major family themes in Ball family.	193
Figure E6.4: Percentages of major family themes in Whitney family.	194
Figure E6.5: Percentages of major family themes in Rosen family.	194
Figure E6.6: Percentages of major family themes in Williams family.	194
Figure E6.7: Percentages of major family themes in Badgley family.	195
Figure E6.8: Percentages of major family themes in Samson family.	195
Figure E6.9: Percentages of major family themes in Langdon family.	195

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to determine whether family members' drawings, reflective comments and observations of associated interactions amongst family members can assist in the development of shared family constructs.

To achieve this, I will draw upon the meanings that family members ascribed to their drawings, and then demonstrate how these descriptions were incorporated into their shared family constructs. In order to provide a visual representation of the relationships between artwork and constructs, a selection of these drawings will be presented.

The connection between what family members draw as their reality and how they describe it will be clearly displayed. Although members of a family may prioritize these realities differently, I will show that there is a consensus amongst family members as to how they perceive their family as a whole. Further, I will illustrate that these shared constructs can be grouped into major themes, the topics of which are important to families in general.

The theoretical bases of the research will be discussed. I will review Kelly's (1955a) Personal Construct Theory, which holds that individuals have unique characteristics, or constructs, which pertain to their perceptions of reality. Also, I will discuss how Procter (1978) and Dallos (1991) elaborated on Kelly's theory by explaining that families also have identifying constructs. Inherent in all of these works is the belief that it is only the single entity – the individual, or the group – that is able to attach the real meaning to its thoughts or actions. This idea reflects a social constructivist perspective, which is at the foundation of this research. Various art-directed therapies will also be presented, and techniques related to methods used in the current research will be discussed.

This study will combine theoretical concepts and practical clinical issues, and will combine *practice-based evidence* as the complement to *evidence-based practice*: the notion that evidence arises not just from experimentation and research but from the practice of conducting clinical work, which leads to an accumulation of experience. One of the pioneers here was of course Freud. However, there is a wealth of case study material elsewhere that shapes practice and theory. Of major importance will be the premise that the traditional methods used to elicit constructs have shortcomings, which can affect the meaningfulness of the results, and that these shortcomings may be alleviated in families who use drawings and reflections. This method has not previously been used in the development of shared family constructs, and the present study will show how the proposed method can improve the process. It is a development that is needed to enhance the applied aspects of Personal Construct Psychology, as well as to add substance and structure to the practice of using drawings in family therapy.

My interest in this topic was derived from 24 years of clinical psychology practice, in which I have worked with family members striving for meaningful changes amongst themselves. Taking an eclectic approach, I strove to find concepts and methods that could have positive effects upon their functioning. During the same time, I was also involved with corporations, who were trying to help improve relationships amongst their employees.

In both types of groups, the procedure was the typical one of participants attempting to verbalize their problems as well as their solutions. However, I found that this method often raised barriers such that the person most verbally skilled or of the highest hierarchical position, would often dominate the group. This would result in

the others feeling intimidated, cause them to participate less, and result in solutions that were not representative of the group per se. I therefore began to look for methods that would involve and encourage comfortable communications amongst participants, equalize positions amongst them, and result in a more comprehensive consensus.

By chance, I found that having individuals draw and explain pictures of their families or their companies resulted in them feeling more relaxed, allowed them to communicate more easily, and to understand the meanings they placed on their lives, or their work more fully. The drawing activity appeared to give them a stronger basis on which to make appropriate changes. This caused me to think of the utility of using drawings in a more structured, therapeutic way, and I began to search the literature for a theoretical basis and related clinical method to accomplish this. This thesis is the result of that search. Although this study will focus on a new method of construct development, it will show implications of it being an initial part of therapy in that family issues may evolve out of the clinical process. However, such therapy will not be pursued in this research.

Families are close to my clinical heart. They are at the centre of this study and have involved children and parents, who often portrayed intense emotions as they drew and shared the meanings of their realities. Their illustrations speak volumes about what it means to be part of a family.

The excitement generated by family members as they engaged in this research is documented throughout the thesis. It is proposed that their efforts will show how this unique, thought-provoking, and non-threatening method enhances the development of shared family constructs, fills a methodological gap within Personal Construct Psychology, and has positive ramifications for working with families.

This study deals with techniques applicable to family therapy and related assessment situations. As it evolved out of my practice, most of the evidence presented in this thesis is from clinical application rather than empirical research. The initial chapters of this thesis set out the theoretical basis of the study on which the research is based. Chapter I focuses on the nature of families and related therapies, Chapter II presents some of the core concepts of Personal Construct Psychology, Chapter III discusses drawings and reflections, and Chapter IV outlines the guiding aims and propositions of the research. Chapter V ties together all four topics and incorporates them into a method designed to investigate the basic premise of the thesis. Chapter VI presents results of the research and discusses their importance to participants in the study, and Chapter VII relates these findings to families in general and assesses the extent to which the study has confirmed its original propositions. The Conclusion provides an overview of the research and its results.



## CHAPTER I: THE FAMILY

The family is the unit of study in this research. This chapter will present a working definition of the family, describe different types of families, and discuss why families rather than individuals were chosen as the focus of study. It will also present a brief history of family therapy, and a discussion of various therapeutic approaches to studying families. It will then relate this family information to Personal Construct Psychology (PCP), which forms the basis of the current research. This background lays the foundation for the next chapter, which will discuss the particulars of PCP.

### 1.1 Working Definition of the Family

The word or concept of 'family' conjures up many images. It suggests certain structures and behaviours that are rather narrow and fixed. It focuses on limitations. However, there is another way to view this phenomenon. A family can be seen as a blend of many aspects, and as having a focus on the ideas of process, change, and close relationships. The following is a working definition of a family that I have developed for the purposes of this thesis:

*The family includes generational ties, a sense of permanence, connectedness, and intense emotionality amongst its members. It is a changing, interactive system of relationships which develops unique construct systems based on individual and shared perceptions that affect all members of the family and govern their interactions.*

This definition acknowledges the variability of what constitutes 'a family.' For me, the value of this definition is its emphasis on the strong ties found amongst family members, ties that are not as important in other groups. It also references ever-changing relationships; the push and pull that everyone in a family feels as they struggle to determine their common beliefs and actions.

This definition reflects my personal view of the family and it is the opening stance from which my clinical work with families proceeds. However, when working with families, and out of respect for the uniqueness of each one of them, my view may continually evolve as they incorporate their own meanings and actions into their constructs and way of life.

### 1.2 Descriptions of the Family

The family appears to have been with us since the beginning of time, with its origins rooted in people's need to group themselves together in order to find protection, emotional, physical, and economic support (Olson & De Frain, 1994). Culture has always determined the important aspects of any family, and definitions of families have changed according to when and where they occurred. For example, during the Middle Ages, many people in England including servants, apprentices, and in-laws lived under one roof in a family-type existence. Today, a similar situation is that of communal living; where related groups intertwine and share financial resources, work assignments, and meals on a daily basis (Macdonald, 1985). Further, some religious groups, such as the Moslems and Mormons, have been known to form a family based on one person married to several others of the opposite sex. By contrast, there has always been the single-parent family, either through death, separation/divorce, or an absent or abandoning parent (Cox, 1993).

Some other family structures include: the blended family (a husband and wife, at least one of whom has been married before, plus one or more children from a previous marriage), the common-law family (a couple who live together for a long enough period so that the state recognizes them to be married without a legal marriage), the consensual family (a man, a woman, and children who live together in a legally unrecognized relationship), the foster family (one or two parents living with their own children or children not related to them, or both), and the extended family (includes one or more nuclear families plus other family positions such as grandparents, uncles, etc.) (Cox, 1993).

In Western culture, the family traditionally has been defined as a married couple or group of adult kin with children, who cooperate and divide labour along gender lines, rear children, and share a common dwelling place; with the nuclear family often referred to as the family. However, this type of family is relatively new, and in North America the basic stereotype of the mother being at home while the father is out working occurs in approximately only five percent of the population (Nairne, 2000).

In Canada, the term, 'family' differs according to who is defining it: the census bureau, or laws that refer to child-welfare, or immigration and municipalities. Government regulations that deal with other aspects, such as medical and family benefits and penitentiaries, also have their own specific definitions (Ward, 1994). Furthermore, there are social definitions, and churches, hospitals, and schools often create their own working definition in order to facilitate their organization.

Across continents and countries, it also appears that whatever the initial definition of any specific family, it has the capability of changing: for example, as mothers start working outside of the home, families become single-parented, children leave home, or other familial or societal issues arise. However, there are still questions as to whether or not there is a common basis to any family.

Throughout history there have been many types of families, but some anthropologists have suggested that the nuclear family, consisting of the father, mother, and child triad, is universal, whether in its basic form or as the building block for other family forms (Murdock, 1965). Others dispute that a father is unnecessary, arguing that the basic family unit is the mother and child dyad (Collier, Rosaldo & Yanigisako, 1982).

My working definition of the family is similar to those described above in that it includes connectedness and generational ties. It also specifies a unit that is enduring yet capable of change. However, there are some basic differences between my definition and the others. For example, I do not delineate the family structure by the age or gender of a family's members, nor by the type of legal, consensual or societal framework that can constitute a family. I have also added the notion of intense emotionality within the unit, and stated that its system of relationships develops unique construct systems that affect all members of the family and influence their interactions.

My definition therefore builds on previous ones, and presents the family as being a fairly enduring unit, which interconnects its members, is intensely emotional for them, is always capable of change, and is the site of the development of unique construct systems.

### **1.3 Families as a Focus of Study**

Traditionally, individuals have been the focus of study in clinical settings. Psychoanalysis is an early example, where it was believed that a person's intrapsychic conflicts caused overt problems. For example, it was believed that the resolution of unconscious conflicts amongst the id, ego, and superego, normalized emotions and eliminated symptoms. Treatment would center on the individual's past, searching out unrecognized conflicts,

largely out of the person's awareness but expressing themselves in present relationships and situations.

Psychoanalysts believed that insight led to understanding and conflict reduction, and ultimately to intrapsychic and interpersonal change (Sharf, 2000).

Although Freud was interested in the family, he still treated people individually. In his 1909 account of dealing with phobic Little Hans, Freud showed that he analyzed the child's Oedipus complex, rather than treating the family (Freud, 1955). One reason for this may have been the psychoanalytic view of the day -- that it was the historical family that was responsible for the neurotic fears that people had -- rather than the current perspective of various therapies, which more often view the family as the place where fears are maintained (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1991, p. 54). However, the treatment of Little Hans may technically be the first 'family' case in the history of both child analysis and family therapy, in that while Freud chose not to work with either the child or the family, he encouraged Hans' father, a physician, to treat his own son under Freud's supervision. The clinical intervention remained individually focussed, but it has been suggested that, "unwittingly, Freud was anticipating a technique used by many of today's family therapists, particularly those with a behavioural approach of using family members, especially parents, as agents of change" (p. 58).

#### **1.4 Family Therapies**

Flugel (1921), a later psychoanalyst, presented a psychoanalytic study of the family, but like Freud's, his thinking was limited to intrapsychic processes and his therapy to individuals. It was not until child psychiatrists began analyzing mothers and children concurrently (Burlingham, 1951), as well as married couples (Oberndorf, 1938), that a psychoanalytic understanding of the family emerged in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From this analysis, the family was seen as a group of interlocking, intrapsychic systems. This view remains current, and psychoanalytic family therapy continues to be concerned with complex interactions among and within individual family members (Nichols & Schwartz, 1995, p. 245).

In the decade following World War II, researchers and practitioners, "turned their attention to the family's role in creating and maintaining psychological disturbance in one or more family members" (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1991, p. 54). This shift was due primarily to the sudden reuniting of families in the aftermath of the war, the ensuing problems amongst family members, both within their family and in society as a whole, and the subsequent expectations that practitioners could help them find solutions to their family problems. As well, the definition of problems considered within the scope of psychotherapy expanded. For example, problems with marital functioning, separation, divorce, delinquency, and various forms of emotional disturbance not requiring hospitalization were considered common family dilemmas and worthy of clinical attention. Thus, many practitioners began to look at family relationships. They began to recognize that, "it was often necessary to alter the family's structure and interaction patterns in order for adaptive behavior to replace problematic, dysfunctional, or maladaptive behaviors, both within and outside of the family" (p. 54).

In the post war years, there were several independent developments that together set the stage for the emergence of family therapy:

- 1) the extension of psychoanalytic treatment to a full range of emotional problems, eventually including work with entire families (Ackerman, 1956);
- 2) the introduction of general systems theory, with its emphasis on exploring relationships between parts that make up an interrelated whole (Bertalanffy, 1968);

- 3) the investigation of the family's role in the development of schizophrenia in one of its members (Bateson, Jackson, Haley & Weakland, 1956);
- 4) the evolution of the fields of child guidance and marital counselling (Jackson, 1959); and
- 5) the increased interest in new clinical techniques such as group therapy (Slavson, 1964).

As part and parcel of the therapeutic shift from individuals to larger groups, such as families, some smaller units in these groups, including couple dyads, were identified for treatment. However, many clinicians still believed that it was the individual that was the major concern – not the couple or the group – and that it was therefore within the individual that change needed to occur (Feixas, 1990a).

The psychoanalytic approach was also evident in the first non-family group therapies. Some therapists saw groups as a representation of the family: with the therapist as father, the group members as siblings, and the group collectively as the mother (Schindler, 1951, p. 93). However, therapists began to realize that there were significant differences between groups and families. For example, groups in therapy were often together for a limited duration, whereas families had a long history and a future. Moreover, groups involved strangers whereas families involved intimates. Hierarchies could be different, too, as groups usually had an equal member status, whereas families often had a designated leader (p. 94). These group vs. family differences required new models.

Psychologists and psychiatrists began adapting psychoanalytic formulations to the study and treatment of the family. Foundational figures in the field were Ackerman, Bowlby, and Dreikers. Ackerman (1938) viewed families as collections of individuals struggling to balance feelings, irrationalities, and desires; Bowlby (1949) noted that parental interactions affected the functioning of his child patients, and he sometimes held family conferences as an adjunct to treatment; and Dreikers (1949) suggested that an individual's goals and behaviours could be fully understood only when comprehended within the family context. Sullivan also began to focus on the family as a field of study and practice, as did his students, Bowen and Jackson. Sullivan (1953) worked mostly with schizophrenics, and speculated that the critical effects in a patient's ongoing family life may eventually lead to schizophrenia. His student, Bowen (1960), was the developer of family systems theory, which conceptualized the family as an emotional unit – a network of interlocking relationships – that are best understood when analyzed within a multigenerational or historical framework. Sullivan's other student, Jackson (1965), saw families as a rule-governed system, suggesting that family interactions followed certain persistent, recurrent patterns.

Bateson, one of the early family therapists in North America, also portrayed families as systems; his basic premise was that the behaviour of every member of the system was related to and dependent on the behaviour of all others (Bateson, Jackson, Haley & Weakland, 1956). In their study, Bateson *et al.* introduced the "double-bind concept" to account for the development of schizophrenia in a family member. This concept embodied the view that when someone receives an important contradictory message and is unable to comment on it, they are in an impossible situation, and when this situation is repeated over time, the individual may show signs of schizophrenia (p. 259). Bateson (1972) was instrumental in applying the concept of cybernetics to all family communications, but specifically studied it in reference to regulations and control, or "feedback" mechanisms amongst family members. His work in the field of communication patterns was of considerable importance and he played a major role in, "shifting the focus of attention for many clinicians from attempting to gain insight into *why* the individual behaves as she or he does, to examining *what* occurs in the exchange of

information and the process of relationships between persons, as in a family” (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1991, p. 8).

Lidz, Cornelison, Fleck & Terry (1957) also studied schizophrenia in families, and broadened the psychoanalytic view to suggest that schizophrenia in a child could be mainly caused by the psychodynamics of her/his parents -- not the family as a social system -- who had failed to provide the essentials needed for the child’s integrated personality development. Lidz *et al.* described two patterns of chronic marital discord that are present in schizophrenic families, as well as in some non-schizophrenic families. *Marital schism* involves the undermining of a spouse, and frequent threats of divorce by one or both partners, and *marital skew* is a situation in which one partner dominates the family to an extreme degree, and in which the marriage is maintained at the expense of the distortion of reality (p. 245).

It was apparent in the 1960s that a major shift was occurring in the treatment of families. Whereas psychoanalytic family therapists had previously focussed on identifying problems *within* the interacting family members, nonpsychoanalytic family therapists were locating problems in the interactions *amongst* people. Family therapy approaches, such as Satir’s (1964) conjoint method -- which involved having two or more family members together in a therapy session -- started to gain wide acceptance. Clinicians became interested in family therapy, not just as a technique, but also as a theoretical approach to counselling (Brammer, Abrego & Shostrom, 1993).

Specific models of family therapy emerged, and in the 1990s the dominating trends were towards integrative approaches and concerns with social and political issues. The eclectic approach also became common amongst therapists (Corey, 1996). This approach was characterized by, “attempts to look beyond and across the confines of single-school approaches in order to see what can be learned from -- and how clients can benefit from -- other perspectives” (p. 448). Therapists began to use different techniques and borrow from different systems, without necessarily subscribing to associated theoretical positions.

Concern with social and political issues became evident in feminist therapies, which integrated several theoretical orientations in their work with families. Feminist therapists subscribed to various theories, such as: object-relations theory, Adlerian, existential, Gestalt, cognitive, systemic, and strategic (Corey, 1996, p. 412). Although there is not a singular, feminist therapy, several beliefs underpin most feminist therapeutic approaches (Bernard, 1972; Ferguson, 1983; Luepnitz, 1988) and the following have been shown by Avis (1986) to be incorporated into feminist family therapies:

- 1) a belief that patriarchy is *alive* and *sick* in socio-political life and the life of the family;
- 2) a realization that “the normal family” has not been so “normal” or wonderful for mothers and clearly reflects the discrimination against women evident in world systems beyond the family;
- 3) a commitment to reforming family and society in ways that fully empower and enfranchise women economically, socially, and politically; and
- 4) therapeutic processes that include a positive attitude toward women, social analysis, explicit consideration of gender issues, and treating the *personal as political*. (Avis, 1986, p. 220)

At this same time, the popular concept of constructivism entailed that individuals create their own view of events and relationships in their lives (Duncan, Parks & Rush, 1990, p. 166). This formulation meant that

people do not discover “reality,” but rather they invent it, and that the perception of their realities guides their actions. As Watzlawick (1984) has written:

Each of us has invented the world in which we live. We do this by the way we use words (language) and how we interpret the events of our lives, both in the present and in the past, and how we connect these events sequentially. (Watzlawick, 1984, p. 113)

In the 1990s there was an emerging trend towards social constructionism, which focussed on the ways in which people make meaning in social relationships (Gergen, 1985). This perspective was reflected in various family therapies, such as: the Reflecting Team (Andersen, 1991), the Linguistic Approach (Anderson & Goolishian, 1992), and the Narrative Approach (White & Epston, 1990). In these therapies, points of view about families are pluralistic, meaning that:

All aspects, for example gender awareness, cultural outlooks, and developmental processes...are entertained as important perspectives in understanding how individuals and families construct their lives...and empathy and therapeutic process are more important than assessment or technique. (Corey, 1996, p. 406)

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most contemporary therapies now apply their theories to families as well to individuals. Therapies may vary in the extent of their focus upon families, as compared to individuals, but both orientations are usually included in the various theoretical approaches (Sharf, 2000).

Some therapists still believe that psychological problems are best managed in isolation, between the therapist and the individual in a private room. There is an ongoing debate over what is the most efficient mode of therapy. Some feel that individual problems – for example, a person’s depression – are best handled singularly; whereas problems that appear more family-oriented, such as the changes involved with the addition of a new child or son-in-law, are better managed within family therapy.

Therapists ultimately make a choice as to their type of practice. Involved in the decision to choose a specific mode of therapy are the clinician’s preference of theory and her/his associated moral view of the world. The two are intertwined. My belief is that individuals develop and are affected significantly by other members in their family, as well as by society in general, and that the feelings and “meanings” of everyone in the family govern each individual’s beliefs and actions, just as they govern the family’s beliefs and actions. My position, which conceptually underpins the basis of this thesis, is that all family members have their own personal characteristics and constructs, as well as a set of shared constructs within which the family believes and acts, and that these two sets of constructs – individual and familial -- are inextricably interconnected. Within this perspective, then, one views the aforementioned problems -- a person’s depression, or a new child or son-in-law in the family -- as being shared situations within the family context; and consequently situations to be addressed within the family, not individually. Resultantly, my preferred unit of study and practice is the family.

### **1.5 Family Therapy of Choice**

The type of family therapy chosen for study in this thesis is based upon Kelly’s (1955a) Personal Construct Psychology (PCP). PCP is based on social constructivism, which changed the way that therapists looked at families. It de-objectified the process. Instead of believing that what one saw in a family was *the family*, the social constructivist approach focussed on *the products* of the family’s perceptions of their realities: their

relationships and their problems. As Korzybski said, "The map is not the territory" (1942, p. 10). Meaning therefore becomes the primary focus. Therapists do not elaborate on family interactions, but on the meanings that were ascribed to these actions. With this perspective, the therapist's approach is likely to be more collaborative than confrontational, more humble than zealous, and more trustful of the family's resources to understand and manage itself. This approach towards family therapy is the basis of my clinical practice.

Personal Construct Psychology has in recent years been expanded into the realm of family therapy where shared family constructs were developed in order to arrive at meanings that guided family member's actions (Dallos & Procter, 1984; Feixas, 1992). Procter (1978) designed a model of a Family Construct System (FCS), which outlined how families negotiate a common family reality. FCS is a model of family therapy for PCP, and will be discussed in the following chapter. My thesis builds upon recent developments in Kelly's PCP theory as they apply to families, and suggests additional techniques to elicit shared family constructs.

This chapter described several types of families and for purposes of this study focussed on one that included the notions of permanence, generational ties, change, and construct systems. It also looked at the historical roots of clinical therapy, showing that therapy with individuals preceded that of families and other types of groups. Several types of therapy were noted, and Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) was introduced as the theoretical basis of the family therapy procedures to be developed in this thesis. This set the stage for a discussion of the integration of PCP, drawings and reflections, which is pursued in the next two chapters, and underlies this study. The next chapter presents an overview of PCP.

## CHAPTER II: PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY

This chapter provides a rationale for using Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) as the basis of the present research. It discusses the history and theory of PCP, with particular reference to families. This is the foundation for the next chapter, which will focus on drawings and reflections as a method of developing family constructs.

George Kelly (1955a) developed PCP. His theory was based on the notion that a person's view of reality is formed by her/his perception of what s/he sees, hears, thinks, feels, and anticipates in her/his world. These perceptions are her/his personal constructs, which are unique and real to her/him and actively guide her/his future thoughts and actions.

Kelly saw people as continually changing, and saw constructs as having the same properties and potential. Therefore, he referred to people as "scientists" who develop constructs about the past, present, and future in order to better predict and live in their "real" world. He saw people -- like scientists -- as continually testing their hypotheses, trying to decide whether to keep old constructs that no longer assist them in their anticipations, or whether to modify or replace personal constructs with others that work better. Kelly felt that people were capable of reflecting upon what was happening in their own world, and also upon how they were thinking and feeling about it. To Kelly, this reflective process likely entailed change in their lives.

Inherent in Kelly's theory of personal constructs is that they are bipolar. By this he means that if a person describes her/himself one way, such as, 'sick,' then by implication s/he will also hold an opposite view, namely, 'well,' that could apply to her/him, too. Thus the construct would have two poles: 'sick and well.' However, Kelly proposed that a person would likely choose the pole or 'end' that would appear to better suit her/his thoughts at the moment and thus guide her/his actions. The chosen pole is called the "emergent pole" and would be foremost in the person's mind. The other end of the continuum would be called the "submergent pole": namely the one that is not so obvious to the person; the one that s/he may not want to see; and the one that might even present itself in dreams (Kelly, 1955b, p. 1048).

Although Kelly was interested in dreams as a way of identifying submerged constructs, he was more concerned with the constructs that people used to structure their world. He did not directly use the notion of the "unconscious." His was a psychology of personal constructs, and he assumed that personal constructs *exist*. If a person came to construe things a different way, Kelly saw that as a new construction for that person -- not a revelation of a subconscious construction which a therapist might have helped bring to awareness (Kelly, 1955a, p. 467). Therefore, Kelly basically viewed the submerged pole as the one that was less available for application to events. Further, it was not that one end was good and the other bad: they were just simply polar ends of the cognitive experiential continuum that might trigger action. These bipolar constructs were real, and therefore helped to define a person's self and reality. Kelly referred to this notion of people seeing their world through their own experiences and constructs as "constructive alternativism" (p. 211).

Kelly's theory had many aspects. He described various ways of construing as well as how different types of constructs might affect behaviours. For example, rigid constructs might make it difficult for a person to make changes, whereas flexible constructs could allow for new constructs and growth. Rigid constructs were called, "pre-emptive constructs," a pigeonhole type of construct, which referred to an absolutist, "nothing-but" situation (Kelly, 1955a, p. 154). An example from a family would be: "This family always agrees on everything."



This construct could affect how family members feel they should act within their family. By contrast, “A *propositional construct* is one which does not disturb the other realm memberships of its elements...” (p. 157). An example of this construct would be: “Although this is a family, there is no reason therefore to believe that it could not be similar, divided or middle-grounded in its opinions.” This construct of the family would then allow for flexible familial behaviours.

Kelly also suggested that although a construct system may appear to be dichotomous, it could also be hierarchical in that some constructs within the system could be superordinate. He stated that there could be, “an infinite number or gradations of value...so it is possible to express an infinite number of gradations of value in terms of a dichotomous construct system” (Kelly, 1955a, p. 142). For example, if a family member had an overall construct regarding her/his family as “together” vs. “apart,” then there could be the hierarchical scale of three underlying basic constructs of “communicating” vs. “silent,” “caring” vs. “neglecting,” and “celebrating each other” vs. “ignoring each other.” In this instance, the family member could rate these underlying or subordinate constructs in terms of their relation to the superordinate construct; placing some near the top of the scale in importance, and others near the bottom. This rating would then create a hierarchical scale within a dichotomous construct system.

In addition to developing the PCP model, Kelly also developed a psychological test that identified the salient constructs in various areas of a person’s life. This test was called the Repertory Grid Test (REP). If, for example, one was interested in a person’s constructs about her/his friends and family, then the REP would require that the person be asked how s/he sees certain people in her/his life. For example, what are her/his father, a friend, and her/his uncle like? Then s/he would be asked how two of them, such as the father and friend, are similar and different from the third person, for example, the uncle. This questioning would occur for each description the person gave. Each answer, or description, that the person gave would be called an “element” and would be placed in a grid. Then the person would assign a value, say on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating how s/he would see these words as describing each one of the persons and her/himself. If the person assigned 1 to the element (the description of the other person), that would mean s/he saw the person as being quite different from her/himself on that description, whereas if s/he assigned 5, that would indicate the person was very similar to her/himself. Consequently, it would be possible to see the differences between each person on each description, as well as how the person viewed her/himself in relation to those people.

Essentially, the REP reveals the constructs that are employed by the person and how s/he was organizing them. For example, if the person saw her/his father and friend as selfish, but her/his uncle as generous, and if s/he viewed her/himself as most similar to her/his uncle, then it could be concluded that one important construct of this person was generous-selfish, with generous being the emergent pole -- the one most obvious and available to the person at that time.

Other methods that Kelly used to obtain constructs were to simply ask persons to describe themselves (Kelly, 1995a, p. 201). Alternatively, he would observe their actions and infer from them what some constructs might be. Procter (1996) used the former method with families, when he asked family members to describe each other as well as their collective unit. He then recorded their responses in his Perceiver Element Grid (PEG). The present research builds on the works of Kelly and Procter and uses family member’s drawings and reflections to develop constructs.

Although Kelly's emphasis is on certain psychological processes within the individual, his theory can also be considered a social theory as it can explain how and why people interact socially. This application is explained by his "sociality corollary" wherein he states, "to the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another he may play a role in a social process involving the other person" (Kelly, 1955b, p. 562). This means that one person does not have to have the same construction as the other person, s/he just has to understand the other person's construing. Kelly elaborates upon this corollary by describing the role that a therapist may play in relation to her/his client. Kelly says, "with respect to 'rapport' we would then believe that the therapist places himself in a position to play a role in relation to his client as soon as he is able to subsume a part of the client's construction system and when he is ready to conjoin his efforts with those of the client in undertaking a social process" (p. 1099). This sociality corollary is integral to the present thesis, which attempts to show family members subsuming each other's construction systems, by having a shared family construct system and therefore being involved in a social process together.

Kelly's sociality corollary is also related to his "commonality corollary" (Kelly, 1955a, p. 104). It too, is involved in interpersonal relations and suggests that if two or more people are involved in the same event and construe, experience, and anticipate it similarly; they will behave similarly as a consequence of their anticipations. An example of this would be a couple wanting to go to the lake together -- each similarly construing the enjoyment of paddling their canoes -- and then at the end of the day, after experiencing all their lake activities, asking each other to do it again. PCP approaches the commonality of behaviour mainly from the point of view of the individual, but it also shows how commonalities in groups can be viewed in terms of similarity in the ways they anticipate and execute their predictions. Kelly states: "People belong to the same cultural group, not merely because they behave alike, nor because they expect the same things of others, but especially because they construe their experience in the same way" (p. 94).

Both of the aforementioned corollaries show how Kelly's theory is applicable not only to the individual but also to the social processes of a family. Families are a group, and members may construe their family experiences similarly or differently. The present research is based on this theory and seeks to show that shared family constructs can develop out of the meanings that family member's ascribe to their drawings and reflections about those drawings.

## **2.1 Development of Personal Construct Psychology**

George Kelly wrote his major work, *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*, in 1955, and until his death eleven years later, he expounded upon his original ideas in papers that dealt with several diverse topics related to psychological inquiry (Maher, 1979). He addressed issues of theory, epistemology, methodology, and practice. In Kelly's early works, he sought to explain the beginnings of his PCP theory. As a student, he had studied behaviourism and psychoanalysis and developed scepticism for both approaches to human nature. He increasingly came to believe that he was more interested in a position that, "commits me to a psychology of man rather than of his circumstances" (Kelly, 1979a, p. 49). Kelly was more interested in the reasons for why people did certain things, rather than identifying the events surrounding them. In *Man's Construction of his Alternatives*, Kelly described man as being a form of "movement" that cannot be explained just in terms of his past or future (1979b). He saw man as a link between the two eras, and elaborated on his basic postulate, "A person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events" (p. 86). From this point of departure from other theories, Kelly then asserted, "man develops his ways of anticipating events by construing...his

runways are the constructs he forms, each a two-way street, each essentially a pair of alternatives between which he can choose" (p. 86).

In later works, Kelly discussed the therapeutic aspects of PCP and saw the therapist's position as being a "role relationship" with her/his client such that the therapist, "develops a reasonable number of relationships with the people who constitute the client's most important surroundings" (Kelly, 1979c, p. 221). This, he felt, would help the client check out the appropriateness of the constructions s/he had devised.

Kelly also addressed problems associated with psychotherapy. In papers on hostility and aggression, he showed how situations with angry clients could be explained within PCP. For example, with hostile clients, he said that therapists need to look specifically at the person and how s/he was dealing with human and social relations as well as her/his need to win, long after the past was gone and hopelessly lost (Kelly, 1979d, p. 280). Kelly saw hostility and aggression in a personal construct system as being something that someone undertakes to, "protect a heavy investment in her/his own construction of life" (1979e, p. 286).

Since Kelly's death in 1966, other writers have explored his concepts, often re-defining or dramatically changing them to suit their experimental, clinical or philosophical pursuits. Papers from a recent PCP conference demonstrate the diversity in topics: "Assessment of conflicts in smokers' willing to quit" (Deubner, 2000); "Core constructs and Ordinary Mind Zen" (McWilliams, 2000); "Spirituality and self: A case for drugs education" (Mallick & Watts, 2000); "George Kelly and mathematics" (Fransella, 2000); and "Construing Berlin" (Scheer, 2000). My research relates largely to Kelly's sociality and commonality corollaries. It will show how these corollaries apply to the family unit, and how shared family constructs can be developed in a way different from Kelly's original methods.

## **2.2 Families and Personal Construct Psychology**

The ways in which the family can be understood within Kelly's related corollaries has been shown above. However, families have been viewed in many other ways, too. Sociologically, the family can be seen as a social institution meeting broad societal goals -- and as a social system having many interdependent components, including gender, race, economic class, age and size (Ganong, Coleman & Mapes, 1990). Psychologically, the family can be defined as, "Two or more persons who are committed to each other and share intimacy, resources, decisions, and values" (Olson & DeFrain, 1994, p. 9). Definitions are many, as are the arguments against viewing the family in any one, fixed way. Instead, psychologists are now asking, "if it is time yet to begin thinking about *the family and families* less in terms of structure and stability and more in terms of process and change, less in terms of traditional images and standards...and more in terms of close relationships" (Scanzoni, Polonko, Teachman & Thompson, 1989, p. 2). This topic of family relationships, process, and change is central to the underlying philosophy of PCP and the present study of shared family constructs. Whereas Kelly's initial work dealt mainly with personal constructs, the following discusses how his model came to be used in the development of family constructs.

Although there may be arguments as to what constitutes a family, there is little disagreement regarding the existence of connections amongst its members. From the early 1970s to the present day, several schools of family therapy have emerged which support this idea, such as therapy systems described as: "structural (Minuchin); strategic (Haley & Madanes); communication and validation (Satir); existential (Whitaker); family of origin (Framo & Bowen) and more..." (Dallos & Draper, 2000, p. 20). This interconnectedness, or shared aspects of families, is also integral to the current research.

In 1974, Watzlawick, Weakland & Fisch studied communication patterns in families. They found that people constructed and reflected on the meanings of each other's communications, and not just on the behaviours of its members. Watzlawick *et al.* noted that problems in families often occur because of difficulties in trying to understand these meanings, and that everyone in the family is affected by a lack of, or by mistaken understanding. The notion of family interconnectedness has been pursued particularly within the systems theory model (Bateson, 1958). This model is based on the idea that interactions within a system are crucial to family functioning, and that the interactions of family members should be the focus of therapy, not individual's personalities or behaviours. The family is seen as more than just a collection of people (Nichols & Schwartz, 1995, p. 195), or to invoke a Gestalt principle, "the whole is more than the sum of its parts" (Perls, Hefferline, & Goodman, 1951, p.50).

Bateson (1958) introduced the notion that a family could be viewed as a cybernetic system that could account for the variability of behaviours within it. Jackson, a co-researcher of Bateson, studied stability in families, and found that members would improve or deteriorate, depending on the physical health of others within their family (1957). He helped develop the premise that family members are interdependent and greatly influence each other's behaviours, thoughts and feelings. Later, Bowen (1960) proposed the idea that an emotional divorce between family members may be relevant to, or even pathogenic in schizophrenic families. Examples of more recent research in this area are the social constructivist therapies of Anderson & Goolishian (1992), who suggested that problem-focussed family communication affects the family; White & Epston (1990), who used narrative therapy to help individuals within a family to better understand themselves and each other through the telling of new narratives and stories; O'Hanlon & Weiner-Davis (1989) and De Shazer (1990), whose goals were to stop "problem focus" and co-create new solutions and life stories; and several feminist family therapies (e.g. Avis, 1986; Luepnitz, 1988), which focussed on the goals of deconstructing the male-dominated culture and achieving women-supported egalitarian families.

Within the PCP model, Procter (1978, 1981, 1985a, 1985b) began to develop a psychology of the family using Kelly's principles. Procter proposed that just as individuals act upon perceived alternatives, so do families act upon a set of shared constructs, which exemplify the family's shared view of their world. He clarified that this does not mean that all family members construe the world exactly alike, but that, "the individual's construing is thus systematically related and the overall family construct system is rooted in a culturally imbued belief system" (Maher, 1979, p. 165). This process causes the family to function in its own, unique way. Procter's ideas were set forth in the development of his Family Construct System (FCS), which "governs the sequences of contingent choices that constitute the interaction patterns of the family members" (Procter, 1981, p. 355).

Whereas Kelly's emphasis was on the personal construct system, Procter's emphasis was on the shared constructs of a family. In Procter's view, family members have their own way of construing each other as well as their family unit. Within his FCS, Procter built on Kelly's sociality and commonality corollaries and formulated two new propositions that would add to construct theory and the study of families:

The Group Corollary: To the extent that a person can construe the relationships between members of a group, he may take part in a group process with them.

The Family Corollary: For a group of people to remain together over an extended period of time, each must make a choice, within the limitations of his system, to maintain a common construction of the relationships in the group. (Procter, 1978, p. 145)

The group corollary includes the idea of individuals construing their mutual relationships as well as each other, and the family corollary states that to be in a family one must be an integral part of that system. Procter's corollaries therefore refer to the construing of relationships within a group (group corollary), and add an extended time factor to people who are in a distinct unit (family corollary). As has been suggested by Feixas (1992, p. 225), this constructivist model could be applied to other institutional analyses, such as business organizations.

During the 1980s and 1990s, others interested in PCP's application to families elaborated upon Procter's ideas: for example, Dallos (Dallos & Procter, 1984; Dallos & Aldridge, 1986, 1987; Dallos, 1991), and Feixas (Feixas, 1990a, 1990b, 1992; Feixas, Procter & Neimeyer, 1992). Prior to its applications to families, couples had been studied within the PCP framework. In this regard, Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1985) reviewed research in the area of personal relationships from the standpoint of the commonality and sociality of personal construct systems. They showed that people in relationships often look for others who have similar constructs, often apply these constructs similarly to mutual acquaintances, and organize their own systems similarly. Such research was the forerunner of PCP studies of families.

Dallos (1991) was a proponent of the concept that individuals and families alike pursue a specific system in constructing beliefs that guide the family members' choices of thoughts and actions. In 1986, Dallos and Aldridge had studied the topic of change as it related to families in therapy, as well as to both the family and therapist's definition of change. They found that both families and therapists had common sense ideas about: "the beginning and end of a period of change; and types of change -- those falling into four categories: of behavioural, structural, communication and experiential" (p. 45). Feixas (1992) considered PCP and whether or not it could help integrate polarities of the individual vs. family, and behavioural patterns vs. meaning. In general, he concluded that the PCP framework could accommodate such integration, and in particular, endorsed Procter's family construct psychology. Feixas saw Procter's approach, with its new corollaries as one that, "conceptualizes familial phenomena from a molar view and establishes a frame for the integration of many of the system notions" (p. 248). In addition, Feixas thought that Procter's family construct system (FCS) improved upon systemic therapies in that it provided a wide multipersonal frame in which a therapist could better understand simultaneously, personal and family dynamics without shifting to different models.

As is shown above, George Kelly's (1955a) personal construct theory lends itself nicely to the study of family constructs. The philosophy of this theory is humanistic in nature and allows for ways to analyze how individuals -- whether alone or with others -- think, feel, and anticipate their world. It not only provides a way to see how the individual's intra-psychic processes are defined or construed, but also how these constructs intertwine and relate to the family's processes, which also can be defined in terms of its own constructs.

PCP emphasizes an appreciation of the uniqueness of each individual, and has a well-developed theoretical and clinical foundation. It believes change can and will occur, and its very process of helping people to understand their personal and shared constructs gives them a way to achieve positive change. Unlike some other theories that objectify and depersonalize individuals, PCP is value-free and focuses on the individual's humanness. It looks specifically at the meanings that people have about themselves and their actions and it honours those meanings. It sees the therapist as someone who, on a fairly equal basis with the client, assists the client in developing or changing her/his constructs -- not as someone in an authoritative position who forces structure or values on her/him (Kelly, 1955a, p. 387). This approach to therapy, human nature and family

functioning is congruent with my view on what a psychological theory and practice should encompass. That is the reason why it was chosen as the theoretical basis for the present research.

### 2.3 Methodological Considerations in Personal Construct Psychology

Despite its conceptual strengths, there are some potential problems with the original PCP methodology for eliciting personal constructs, namely problems related to the communication between the examiner or therapist and the participant. The present research proposes a method that could improve upon the original methodology.

Kelly (1955a) first acknowledged this shortcoming in his discussion of analyzing (REP) results. Particularly, he recognized difficulties with "situational constructs." Situational constructs are defined as those constructs that are more "physical-situational" rather than psychological or social in nature (p. 278). These can appear within the examiner's procedure. For example, the examiner may be asking a client how two people are alike and the client may say, "they're both from the same town" (p. 222). When the examiner knows that the client is of normal intelligence, and it is obvious that there may be further information, the examiner will pursue her/his questioning. S/he will want to know more specifically and psychologically how these two people are alike and could even ask other ways in which they are similar. However, regardless of how the examiner asks the question, s/he may not get a response that would indicate any other ways in which the two people are alike. The specific problem posed here is that the client is unable to give meaning to figures involved in the test, or may not be able to communicate her/his meaning -- either through anxiety, lack of words, or inability to cast her/himself in a specific role.

Other classes of constructs that often need follow-up procedures for the questioning are shown below, along with a common type of answer:

Excessively Permeable Constructs.	"These two are alike; they're both women.
Excessively Impermeable Constructs.	"These two are tool makers and the other is a die-maker.
Superficial Constructs.	"They have the same color eyes."
Vague Constructs.	"They're both O.K."
Constructs Which are a Direct Product of the Role Title.	"Both are hard to understand." (Kelly, 1955a, pp. 222-223)

Such communication problems can inhibit the development of constructs, a situation that the present research methodology ameliorates. By allowing clients to draw family pictures freely and spontaneously, a more relaxed situation may occur, thus allowing them to convey their meanings more easily and accurately -- through both drawings and words.

This method could also be of specific help in the development of both poles of a construct. For example, as clients draw their pictures and then reflect upon any similarities or differences they see within their pictures, they may ascribe -- or be encouraged to ascribe -- contrasting/opposite meanings they have of them. This could ultimately assist in the dichotomous development of that emerging construct.

A specific REP problem addressed by Kelly related to "superficial constructs." Here it was suggested that a person's constructs might be, "preverbal or childlike in character. The meaning is likely to be highly personalized and difficult to communicate" (Kelly, 1955a, p. 239). A preverbal construct is defined as, "one which continues to be used even though it has no consistent word symbol" (p. 459). Symbolism is important in

the development of constructs, and words are the most frequently used symbols. However, if one does not know or recall the word to depict a specific characteristic, then problems can arise in the clarification or development of constructs. Kelly gives an example: "one's mother may become a symbol for the services upon which one sees himself as being dependent for life and sustenance" (pp. 459-460). An extension of this is that the infant may not cognitively be applying the word "mother" to the feeling, but still be experiencing those feelings when she is around. Thus, the symbol of the mother would become synonymous with the feelings invoked, and this symbol could be used and maintained over time; perhaps without the knowledge that the word to describe those feelings is actually "mother." Therefore, when the examiner asks for a word-symbol that would describe those feelings, or who was associated with it, or what other person may now have those traits, the client may not be able to give the appropriate or true response. As Kelly states, "this imposes obvious limitations upon the ways one can come to see himself as sustained and secure" (p. 460). In this situation, the examiner may sense the client's confusion or the inability of the client to articulate, but feel helpless to do anything about it.

Kelly saw these preverbal constructs as being very important in that they may be the actual basis of a person's construction system in some cases. He realized that they were difficult to access, and said that in such cases, "the therapist must be prepared to help the client identify his constructs by means of other symbols and then subject them to the validating test" (Kelly, 1955a, p. 465). In this regard, Kelly suggested "role-playing" and other "non-intellectual" approaches (p. 464). Kelly did not specifically mention drawings, but they are another type of symbol and another way of getting at preverbal constructs. Drawings can reduce the anxiety of identifying these constructs because thoughts do not have to be portrayed directly through words, which may be difficult to choose or say at that time, or which may have a potential "fear of being judged" component. Client's anxiety-free perceptions of their drawings may ultimately help in the later therapeutic reconstructions of their preverbal events.

Drawings could also help in a situation where elements that deal with abuse, trauma, sex or excreta are presented. Kelly felt that such topics could have an inhibiting effect on the formulation of constructs. He suggested that the client could perhaps act out his representation of such things (another way of symbolizing events), but Kelly held out little hope that this could be effective (1955a, p. 460).

Also in the REP situation, a client may need to reject certain figures in her/his life. However, it may be that s/he is confused about them, or that s/he, "does not wish to cast himself in the role of one who expresses aloud his view with regard to them" (Kelly, 1955a, p. 241). With the proposed method of drawing, such thoughts may be less anxiety-ridden and thus more meaningful, providing the basis for more accurate construct development. The following chapter will elaborate upon this aspect of drawings being a more relaxed method of construct development, and will show how drawings are used in various psychotherapies.

Most of Kelly's (1955a) methods of eliciting information for tests or therapy basically employ the verbal skills of both client and examiner or therapist. Concepts are not always clear, and the therapist may have to facilitate a lot of talking in order to arrive at specific information. For example, a therapist may detect irregular and varying thoughts and behaviours in a client. These could be seen as, "loose constructs... which lead to varying predictions but which, for practical purposes, may be said to retain their identity" (p. 484). Kelly explains that healthy people have, "core structures... which govern a person's maintenance processes -- that is, those by which he maintains his identity and existence" (p. 482), and that such constructs tend to be tight. Therefore, therapy would probably consider the tightening and loosening of construction.

Kelly states that, “new constructs are formed by loosening up old ones and tightening up the tentative formulations which begin to take shape in the resulting disarray...and free association, induced phantasy, dream reporting, and intermittently broken silences are all techniques for construct loosening” (1955a, p. 484). Again, asking a client to freely describe dreams and discuss situations about which s/he may feel very confused or awkward seems a difficult task. By contrast, such elaborations may be enhanced by drawings, which have been successful in allowing individuals to express themselves in a rich fashion (Oster & Montgomery, 1996). With the drawing approach, clients may more easily and clearly reflect their thoughts and feelings: loose or tight constructs could be dealt with in a more productive manner.

Procter (1996), with his extension of the personal construct system into a family construct system, addressed some of the REP problems by developing an interviewing method, the Perceiver-Element Grid (PEG). This method is used to obtain construing within a family by simply asking family members how they see themselves and others. Their answers are then placed in a grid and can be analyzed to show many constructs within that family.

Procter’s method is different from Kelly’s original REP in that the latter was a uniform system for personal constructs, with specific categories and procedures that the therapist was expected to follow in each circumstance. By contrast, Procter uses individual family members’ own words and ideas, rather than those imposed on them by an instruction manual. Although Procter’s method is still structured, it has fewer constraints. Potentially it is more informal and easier in its application than the original REP. This then allows the possible loosening of some of the inhibitions that affected the quality of construing in Kelly’s original REP. However, both methods still use words as the primary method of communicating; a situation which continues to present inherent problems when eliciting constructs, whether they be personal or familial.

Kelly presented the REP as an initial way to develop constructs. However, his philosophy of an ever-changing reality lends nicely to the idea that methods of developing constructs can change too. Therefore, the proposed method of using drawings is based on Kelly’s original method and expands upon Procter’s. The major difference between the two is that clients formerly only spoke their initial thoughts, instead of engaging in the present drawing and analysis method.

This chapter has focussed on the basic components of Kelly’s (1955) Personal Construct Psychology (PCP), which adopts a constructivist view in its use of the metaphor of “man the scientist.” This is a view, which purports that although we can conceive of an objective external reality we can only know our own reality through the lenses of our construct system/understandings. More specifically, Kelly argues that we construct alternative versions of the world, and this is contained in Kelly’s notion of bipolarity.

Descriptions of various types of constructs and their clinical treatment were presented, and some later research in PCP noted, such as the application of PCP principles to the study of family dynamics. The relationship of PCP to Procter’s (1981) Family Construct System (FCS) was discussed and a proposal was put forth for the present study: that FCS is a good basis on which to build the method of using drawings and reflections to develop shared family constructs. Methodological problems inherent in PCP were also discussed, and possible solutions of using drawings and reflections were introduced. The next chapter will describe the general development of art and drawings as they have been used in assessment and treatment settings. This will lead into the proposition of how PCP, drawings and reflections can be combined to better facilitate the elicitation and development of shared constructs within a family.



### CHAPTER III: DRAWINGS AND REFLECTIONS

This chapter traces the development of the use of drawings and reflections for expressing meaning, as it relates to the research study of this thesis. For this purpose, the origins of drawings are also examined with their later use in assessment or treatment contexts, especially those including families. The advantages of using drawings and reflections as a therapeutic and assessment technique are outlined, and the applicability of this method in the development of family constructs within the Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) model is discussed.

Currently there are few references in the literature regarding the use of drawings and reflections in conjunction with PCP (e.g. Ravenette, 1999); this shortcoming will be addressed with the suggestion that both practice and theory can be enhanced when combined and used in the method discussed in this chapter. It will also show that drawings and reflections permit people to express their feelings and thoughts in a manner that can be more rich and less threatening than purely oral means, that this method of expression fits nicely within the tenets of PCP, and that it is an excellent method for developing constructs within the family.

This thesis builds upon PCP and methods used in art-oriented psychotherapies. In my research, family members are first asked to draw representations of their families, and then later as they reflect upon their drawings, to put words to their pictorial images. With the help of a therapist, the potential meanings inherent in these drawings and words are synthesized and developed into constructs, which the family determines are representative of them. Procter's (1996) Perceiver Element Grid (PEG) is used in this process. In Procter's PEG, he directly asked family members for verbal descriptions of their family, and then placed these words in a grid to show how members viewed themselves, each other, and their family as a whole. In my research, family members drew their family representations, put meanings from these drawings into words, and these words were then placed in the PEG.

The primary reason for including drawings in the present research is predicated on the concept that a person's spontaneous visual projections and responses are frequently expressed more directly in pictures than in words. Projective personality tests, such as the Rorschach and Thematic Apperception Test ask clients to interpret an unstructured or ambiguous stimulus. The underlying idea is that they will "project" their thoughts and true feelings onto the stimulus interpretation, thereby revealing elements of their personality (Nairne, Smith & Lindsay, 2001, p. 489). Projective drawing techniques have been defined as techniques in which, "the client is given a relatively unstructured task that permits wide latitude in its solution. The assumption underlying such methods is that the individual will project her or his characteristic modes of response into such a task" (Anastasi, 1988, p. 19). Knoff & Prout (1985) saw projective drawings in young children and adolescents as portraying, "the interaction between a [person's] personality and his/her perceptions of relationships among peers, family, school, and significant others" (p. 4). In drawings, a person's imaged experience is transposed directly into a picture on paper, and therefore circumvents the perhaps more difficult process of having to seek out the correct words to express it (Naumburg, 1966). This process is particularly relevant to my research, where participants of varying ages and verbal abilities can be actively involved at the outset, expressing thoughts about their family in an easy, comfortable, and productive way, on paper. This act sets the groundwork for later, reflective verbalizing, which builds on the initial expressions and assists in the development of family constructs. By engaging in this creative

and reflective process, participants are symbolizing PCP's model of the construction of reality, in that family members' perception of their family becomes their reality (Kelly, 1955a).

The terms, *drawing*, *art*, and *artwork* are used throughout this thesis. Drawing generally refers to a specific way of making art; other examples would be painting or carving. Drawing is a linear, pictorial, representational act, and the words, drawing and art can be considered interchangeable. Generally, the therapeutic use of drawing is assumed in the term *art* (Wadeson, 1980), and this is its application throughout this thesis.

### 3.1 The Origin of Drawings

Historically, drawings have been with us since the beginning of time. All cultures and forms of civilisation have used drawings to depict their thoughts, feelings and actions – past, present and future. It has been suggested that many of these drawings were purely functional in that they were used, instead of words, to communicate (Feder & Feder, 1981). It is common knowledge that archaeologists use uncovered drawings to understand ancient people and their social interactions. Basically, drawings involve the process of making graphic marks. Cardinal (1989), who studied primitive marks, comparing graffiti, prehistoric Camunian rock incisions, as, “picture making at its most basic” and drawings by Miro and Michaux, argued, “it is the first-hand experience of seeing and absorbing pictures which creates their impact and meaning -- the mark has its own significance as well as that of the time, place, and original reason for its creation” (p. 113). This belief is integral to my present research, in which family members drew representations of their family unit in order to express significant meanings that ultimately facilitated the development of their shared family constructs.

Developmentally, drawings are one of the first determined actions that a child makes. Anyone who has watched young children draw can attest to the fact that it can be a most exciting, consuming, and pleasurable activity for the child. From the moment a child is able to pick up a crayon or pencil, s/he will draw on anything (including walls!), with obvious emotion and energy. Burt (1921), in his systematic study of children's drawings, describes how this ability develops. He states that scribbles and circles seem to come first, but by the age of three, images start to emerge and a greater satisfaction in creating them can be observed. After that, basic lines and structures are drawn, with a peak of concreteness and details being reached at about age ten. At that time, Burt believes that artistic deterioration begins to set in due to emotional conflicts and advances in cognitive and language abilities. Koppitz (1984) agrees, stating that at puberty youngsters feel self-conscious and critical about their drawing abilities. Older adolescents, however, take up an interest in colour and form. At adulthood, drawing abilities are fairly similar to those exhibited in younger years.

Aesthetically, the various experiences of producing drawings have been of great interest. One ponders whether Van Gogh pursued his art with happiness or depression, or what was on the mind of painter and sculptor Michelangelo, as he painted the ceilings in the Basilica. Although one may venture that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, it appears to be true that feelings are predominately in the hand of the drawer as s/he expresses them through her/his art.

Clinically, spontaneous artwork has been used in the areas of psychiatry, psychology, psychoanalysis, and especially art therapy, in order to treat a wide range of neurotic and psychotic adults, as well as emotionally disturbed adolescents and children. Educators, social workers and other types of therapists have also found various aspects of artwork useful. Although artwork was introduced as a clinical approach in psychiatry, it has now evolved into the specialized field of art therapy. One particular form -- dynamically oriented art therapy, “has been an established form of psychotherapy for over 26 years, and it continues to gain recognition and

support” (Naumburg, 1966, p. 1). One aspect of Naumburg’s therapy, that of having the client interpret her/his own artwork, is incorporated into the research of my thesis such that family members reflect on their family drawings in order to develop shared family constructs.

Drawings by psychotic individuals were amongst the first to be interpreted by clinicians in attempts to better understand mental processes. Art of “insane asylum” patients was studied because of their sometimes strange qualities, and many examples of this art were shown in the Heidelberg Collection in 1922 (Prinzhorn, 1972). Edwards studied early relationships between art and psychoanalysis and described attitudes towards art and madness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Case & Dalley, 1992). He found that ideas from other areas, such as the use of art in rituals, religious customs and anthropology form a “more elaborate and enduring context” for art therapy that was in existence well in advance of its establishment as a discrete profession. Edwards felt that art history and the history of psychiatry gave rise to certain models of art therapy practice and postulates that:

The roots of codified, diagnostic attitude towards imagery are in the eighteenth-century neoclassicism, and in their ‘rational’ belief that a person’s state of mind could be read from a picture. The depiction of feeling in art was formalised and enabled the painter and his audience to remain uninvolved. By contrast, the nineteenth-century romantics embraced a positive conception of the imagination and valued the artistic representation of inner experience. This attitude related to a belief in the natural healing capabilities of art. (Case & Dalley, 1992, p. 4)

### *3.1.1 Drawings in Clinical Settings*

Early psychoanalysts emphasized symbols used in dreams, with Freud stating that these images represented “forgotten memories” (1955). He recognized the problems inherent in a patient’s inner visual experiences being retranslated from an image into a verbal communication and said:

We experience it [a dream] predominately in visual images; feelings may be present too, and thoughts interwoven in it as well; the other senses may also experience something, but nonetheless it is predominantly a question of images. Part of the difficulty of giving an account of dreams is due to our having to translate these images into words. “I could draw it,” a dreamer often says to us, “but I don’t know how to say it.” (Freud, 1958, p. 90)

Jung asserted that visual images represented parts of personal experiences. During his own self-analysis, Jung had drawn his dreams and fantasies and encouraged his patients to do the same. He said, “what a doctor then does is less a question of treatment than that of developing the creative possibilities latent in the patient himself” (Jung, 1983, p. 41). Jung felt that the conscious mind was always interfering with a person’s determination to “let things happen” in the psyche and he therefore recommended that patients visualize and draw their fantasies. He felt that this would put them into an active state and would give them a method to become more independent of the analyst and therefore become more psychologically mature. Jung stipulated that the pictures needed to be intellectually understood and emotionally accepted before they could be consciously integrated (Case & Dalley, 1992, p. 92). He often marvelled at the artistic creations of his patients, but did not want these creations treated as serious art:

It is not a question of art -- or rather it should not be a question of art -- but of something more, something other than mere art: namely the living effect upon the patient himself. The meaning of individual life, whose importance from the social standpoint is negligible is here accorded the highest value, and for its sake the patient struggles to give form, however crude and childish, to the "inexpressible." (Jung, 1970, p. 79)

From these analytic beginnings, drawings came to be understood in terms of spontaneous expressions that gave access to unconscious material and therapists used this as a foundation for diagnostic work in psychoanalysis (Case & Dalley, 1992). However, Naumburg (1966), a dynamically oriented art therapist since 1941, believed that there were other ways to work with drawings in therapy, and she encouraged her clients to engage in word association to the images they created. This strategy opened the door to new ways of working with artwork in a therapeutic milieu, and removed art in clinical settings from the exclusive domain of psychoanalysis.

### **3.1.2 Drawings in Art Therapy**

Edith Kramer (1971), an art therapist who worked extensively with children, followed Naumburg in the 1950s. Kramer's approach was different from Naumburg's in that Kramer emphasized the healing properties of the creative process itself, which she believed did not require verbal reflection. In Kramer's therapy, the art alone forms the basis for insight. Kramer's perspective was indicative of the emerging therapeutic trend towards considering the client's view as being more essential than that of the therapist's. This shift in emphasis was in direct contrast with previous psychoanalytic approaches, and many therapists took up the challenge of combining their own therapeutic ideals with the use of art expression. As a result, art therapy became a recognized profession in the 1960's, with the development of professional training programs and associations (Wadeson, 1980, p. 14).

Therapists from various theoretical orientations began including artwork in their treatment. While adhering to the basics of their theories, they introduced art as a means of achieving therapeutic goals. In the 1980s, art therapists worked within different theoretical systems. The most popular approaches were: psychodynamic, humanistic, and the behavioural/cognitive/developmental systems (Rubin, 1987). Although there were other approaches, for example, reality and transactional analysis, they were not developed as a general framework in which artwork was a major focus.

Roth (1987), a behaviourist art-therapist, stated: "All forms of psychotherapy...with or without art, share fundamental commonalities, to the extent that they all are attempts to help human beings who have problems" (p. 216). In this vein, she applied behaviour modification techniques, for example, operant conditioning and modeling procedures, to the practice of art therapy with emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded children. She developed a process called "reality shaping," and explained it as follows:

It involves education during the process of therapy. Reality shaping begins by identifying a concept that is poorly conveyed in the child's productions during art therapy sessions. This concept is then developed into representational form through the construction -- first by the art therapist and then by the child -- of increasingly complex two-and three-dimensional models. This structured technique gives concrete form to vague concepts that may underlie a child's pathology. (Roth, 1987, p. 218)

Roth felt there were few differences between psychodynamically oriented art therapy, which emphasizes the role of internal processes, and behaviourally oriented art therapy, which focuses on the functional adaptation of behaviour.

For example, an art therapist who encourages a blocked or inhibited patient to make a scribble in order to involve the patient with media, and then praises the individual for his/her participation, is using a behavioural approach (e.g. reinforcement)... all psychotherapy, regardless of the techniques used, is a learning process. (Roth, 1987, pp. 216-217)

A cognitive-behavioural approach to using art was also developed. Silver (1987), a cognitive art therapist, defined cognition as, "the process of knowing" and explained his approach as:

...exploring the role of art in identifying, evaluating and developing cognitive skills. It is based on the premise that art can be a language of cognition paralleling the spoken word. Cognitive skills can be evident in visual as well as verbal conventions. These skills, traditionally assessed and developed through language, can also be assessed and developed through certain art activities. (Silver, 1987, p. 233)

Silver found this method particularly appropriate for his clients who had difficulty using words to express their thoughts and feelings. In 1983, he developed a cognitive and creative drawing test, which included three concepts:

*Predictive drawing* assesses the ability to sequence and to deal with hypothetical situations. *Drawing from observation* assesses the ability to represent spatial relationships of height, width, and depth. *Drawing from imagination* assesses the ability to deal with abstract concepts, creativity, and the projection of feelings. (Silver, 1987, p. 237)

As an example of tasks that Silver would employ, the following illustrates the concept of drawing from imagination. In this task, the client has to form a concept, make selections, and combine them into a context -- all fundamental operations which are involved in linguistically forming a sentence. The clients select and combine, using art materials instead of words. They draw their images and then show how they formed them. Silver felt this task allowed the therapist to evaluate the client's creative skills, which are related to many areas of cognition: for example, emotional adjustment (Silver, 1987. p. 238).

Another approach to art therapy incorporates perspectives from several developmental theories. These include psychosexual theory (Freud, 1962), psychosocial stages (Erikson, 1950), cognitive studies (Brunner, 1964; Piaget, 1954), as well as references to normal child development in art (DiLeo, 1977; Harris, 1963), which have been explained as follows:

Our developmental approach to art therapy focuses on normal development as the framework for understanding and intervening with clients whose development is not proceeding according to "normal" expectations. (Aach-Feldman & Kunkle-Miller, 1987, p. 251)

These developmental therapists follow a progression of working from a nondirective to a structured art environment. In the early phases of treatment, clients are offered a wide selection of materials, and they determine the activity, theme and content of their sessions. As the clients progress to the more structured treatment phases, the therapist presents specific art materials with accompanying instructions. Throughout the sessions, the therapist notes the clients' level of skill and organizational abilities, their response to art materials, their use of structured and non-structured formats and their capacity for expressing their feelings (Aach-Feldman & Kunkle-Miller, 1987, pp. 254-257).

The therapeutic (art) tasks are tailored to the client's developmental level. For example, if a client was construed to be at Piaget's (1954) "sensorimotor stage," defined as being able to engage in the trial-and-error process, and being capable of object permanence, then the therapist could use the appropriate art level in exploring, experimenting, and manipulating various art media (Hartley, Frank & Goldenson, 1952). Such matching or considerations should also help the child learn to trust -- consistent with Erikson's (1950) psychosocial stage of "trust vs. mistrust." If the client was at Piaget's (1954) "preoperational stage," using symbolic substitutes, classifying, and being egocentric, then the therapists could choose a method which would help her/him use basic art tools and skills that bring success, and focus on encouraging the client as s/he drew various shapes (Williams & Wood, 1987). The therapist could also encourage controlled manipulation and accidental drawings, in order to respond to Erickson's (1950) stage of "autonomy vs. sharing," which focuses on learning to control and let go.

Within the developmental approach, Aach-Feldman & Kunkle-Miller (1987) use both verbal and nonverbal responses to clients' artwork, and have noticed that the nonverbal responses often provide significant clinical information regarding affective expression. They find this approach especially useful when dealing with clients who are functioning at the earliest, pre-symbolic stages of artistic expression, "a time when neither insight nor sublimation (the two most common goals in art therapy) is likely to be possible" (p. 254). The therapists state:

...nonverbal behaviours may be the *only* source of information. The closeness or distance the client chooses to place between himself and the art therapist, facial expressions, gestures, and the position and muscle tone of the body are uncensored affective responses, which reveal much about any client. With individuals who do not speak, an observation of nonverbal behaviours provides useful information regarding both positive and negative reactions to the environment. (Aach-Feldman & Kunkle - Miller, 1987, p. 257)

A humanistic approach to art therapy was developed by Garai (1987), who incorporated the three following principles into his sessions: (1) emphasis on life -problem solving, (2) encouragement of self-actualization through creative expression, and (3) emphasis on relating self-actualization to intimacy and trust in interpersonal relations and the search for self-transcendent life goals (p. 189). Garai describes one example of the use of mental imagery and art are used in the healing process. In a situation in which a patient is suffering pain, s/he is asked to draw a picture of the pain, and then is asked to imagine that the pain is gradually leaving her/his body, such that s/he is relaxing. Finally, the patient draws a picture of the pain leaving her/his body. Garai says that when people draw this last picture, they sometimes, "experience a similar, but longer-lasting effect than that derived from drugs" (p. 197). Another example of this treatment approach involves a situation in which a patient

is not able to solve an important interpersonal problem. The patient is asked to imagine that s/he is relaxing somewhere, and while trying to solve her/his problem, s/he will call on an "inner advisor" to help her/him. The therapist then asks the patient to draw the dialogue with the "inner advisor" in order to understand the messages received from the advisor (p. 197).

Within the humanist domain, there is also a phenomenological approach towards art therapy (Betensky, 1987). This phenomenological approach is based on the concept of Husserlian phenomenology: intentionality. Betensky defines intentionality as meaning, "I am intent on the thing that I am looking at" (p. 151). She sees the client as being an, "overburdened man...who flees...into pathology" (p.150). Betensky sees the client's artwork as being not only therapeutic, but also a pre-intentional record of her/his stresses. The therapist's task is to guide the client into the intentional perception and study of her/his art, which may open new possibilities for her/him (p. 150). Betensky expands on this concept:

The act of *seeing* is of vital importance. Perhaps this is one of art therapy's most important contributions to general therapy and to phenomenology itself, because art therapy pays attention to authentic experiences in a twofold way. First, clients in art therapy produce an art projection that is a direct experience. Then, they experience its appearance in their eyes and in their immediate consciousness, and this is a second direct experience. In the second experience, however, they need some help, for they must learn how to look in order to see all that can be seen in the art production. (Betensky, 1987, p 150)

Betensky (1987) quotes Merleau-Ponty: "To look at an object is to inhabit it and from this habitation to grasp all things" (pp. 150-151). Betensky adds, "This is a phenomenologist's way of looking in order to see, seeing with intentionality" (p. 151).

The method of phenomenological art therapy is divided into four sequences: (1) pre-art play with art materials, (2) creating the artwork/phenomena, (3) directly experiencing the artwork through perceiving, displaying, distancing, intentional looking, describing and unfolding, and (4) phenomenological integration (Betensky, 1987, pp. 157-165).

The first two sequences are fairly unstructured. In the third sequence, the therapist asks the client, "What do you see?" This question involves two fundamental aspects of the phenomenological approach: one is on the importance of the client's perception -- what do YOU see? The other aspect is on phenomenological evidence -- what do you SEE? This question, posed two different ways, assures the client that her/his way of seeing the picture is essential, that s/he does not need to see it as others might, and that by actually seeing the various components of her/his artwork -- whether they complement, clash, or coexist -- s/he may gradually become more aware of her/his feelings and be able to identify and name them (Betensky, 1987, p. 159).

In the fourth sequence of phenomenological integration, self-discovery may occur and be discerned by the therapist. First, the client reflects on the development of her/his artwork, on her/his original intentions and on the actual outcomes. Second, s/he searches for similarities and differences in her/his artwork over time, looking for patterns in both her/his artwork and behaviours. In the last phase, the client searches for parallels between the struggles of art expression and her/his struggles with real-life experiences. Clients come to, "apply the newly acquired art of looking to phenomena outside and around themselves, in their own world and in that of others" (Betensky, 1987, p. 159). As Betensky states:

This is the particular contribution of the phenomenological approach to art expression in therapy -- arrived at through artwork and the subsequent treatment of the organization of the art expression -- from preintentional functioning to fully intentional living. (Betensky, 1987, p. 165)

The above examples have shown how therapies with various theoretical bases have incorporated the use of artwork into their treatment programs. However, many therapists use a combination of approaches when working with art. Harriet Wadeson (1980), a more eclectic art therapist states:

I would describe my approach as humanistic, existential and phenomenological. I see psychotherapy as primarily an educational process to help people with problems in living rather than as a treatment for a disease. The educational process is not the traditional cognitive model, but rather an affectually oriented facilitation of emotional growth. (Wadeson, 1980, p. xi)

Wadeson recognizes that a variety of methods are used by different practitioners. She says: "Some place emphasis on the art, some on the therapy, and many on both. Some art therapists consider themselves psychotherapists using art expression as a therapeutic modality" (1980, p. xi). She emphasizes that art therapy is used in a variety of settings, including nursing homes, drug and alcohol addiction centres, homes or institutions where there are physically, emotionally and mentally handicapped people, educational settings where there are the so-called "normal" children, and other areas where there are disturbed or socially disadvantaged people. Further, she sees art expression being geared towards self-development in personal growth workshops (pp. 14-15).

### ***3.1.3 Drawings in Psychological Assessments***

Drawings have been used either as a primary clinical method in psychological assessments and treatment or as an adjunctive tool with various types of therapy. Drawings are seen as a specific language with symbols and meanings unique to the artist, that when shared with the therapist, can be a distinct contribution to the therapeutic or evaluative process.

Assessments of mental maturity, personality, and emotional characteristics have been done with the use of drawings (Goodenough, 1926; Harris, 1963; Klepsch & Logie, 1982). Some of the more common protocols used by clinical psychologists are: Human Figure Drawing Test (Mitchell, Trent & McArthur, 1994), Kinetic House-Tree-Person (Burns, 1987), Draw-A-Person (Machover, 1952), Kinetic Family Drawing (Burns & Kaufman, 1970), and the Diagnostic Drawing Series (Mills, Cohen & Meneses, 1993). These tasks are used with children, adults, groups and families, and most of them use specific, structured inquiries and interpretations determined by the test's designer, rather than by the client. However, such tests have gradually been replaced by assessment procedures, in which art interpretations are provided by the client (McNiff, 2000). This latter preference is applicable to my present research, in which family members provided their own interpretations of their drawings in order to facilitate the development of their shared family constructs.

### ***3.1.4 Drawings in Family Therapies***

The focus on families, from a therapeutic point of view, emerged around the time of World War II when there was a heightened interest in the effects of social change on people's feelings and behaviours. By 1970, there were several philosophies and techniques being used with families in therapy (Gil, 1994). An outgrowth of this was art therapy school, where therapists were trained in specific art oriented methods and followed structured



formats with their clients. Some art therapists that incorporated drawing tasks into family therapy were Kwiatkowska (1978), Belnick (1993), Rubin, (1987), Wadeson (1980), Landgarten (1993), and Riley & Malchiodi, (1994).

Kwiatkowska (1978) is a leading proponent of family art therapy. Her philosophy and methods have been adopted universally, and several of her methods used in family art evaluations are incorporated into my present research. Particularly her tasks of having family members draw individual and joint scribbles, along with representations of their family and giving their interpretations, are central to my process of eliciting and developing shared family constructs. These constructs are later placed in Procter's (1996) Perceiver Element Grid.

Kwiatkowska (1978) was an artist who entered the field of art therapy in the early 1950s. Over the years, she had worked in mental health agencies, hospitals and universities. In these positions, she soon became active in the field of psychiatry and in studies of schizophrenia, adolescent development, families, and family therapy. As a teaching therapist in a hospital, serendipitously she became aware of the positive effects of using art therapy with families, and became a proponent of the combined technique of integrating family art therapy with various spoken, word-oriented therapies (p. 3). To work with outpatient families, she developed a therapy that concentrated on the use of art as the primary mode of communication and treatment. In this setting, she found that, "verbal exchange between therapists and family members has proved to be the most therapeutically fruitful when it is stimulated by and directly connected with their art productions" (p. 137). Kwiatkowska found that this method helped overcome many difficulties that arose in therapy with families. Some difficulties were particularly related to families with a schizophrenic member, but as she states, problems could affect all families.

The unequal emotional and developmental levels of the family group may entail special difficulties for the therapist. He has to find a common starting point, a common denominator that will be equally accessible both to him and to each member of the family. The therapist may approach the family at a level above their reach; he may also be hampered by the family's unequal verbal skills. Expression through graphic media may help overcome these difficulties. It permits communication on a primitive level accessible to all family members, regardless of their ages or degree of illness. It is task oriented; its products are tangible and durable and can be reviewed. Therefore, it helps the family to focus on issues that would otherwise vanish before they can be explored. (Kwiatkowska, 1978, p. 138)

This aspect of dealing with differing emotional and developmental levels of family members was also encountered in my current research, and it was my impression that the use of artwork helped to alleviate such obstacles.

Kwiatkowska (1978) also found that art-based therapy helps considerably with families who tend to act out their emotions, in that these types of people often respond better to a, "primitive and action-oriented approach than to verbal exchange" (p. 138). She used these methods with both short and long term treatment, and stated:

The problem, or what the family sees as a problem, is often represented spontaneously in their first pictures. The initial reason for seeking treatment is overshadowed by a totally different aspect of the family disturbance brought to their awareness through their art productions. (Kwiatkowska, 1978, p. 139)

Kwiatkowska developed her series of art-related tasks into a structured procedure called, "Family Art Evaluation," which has become a routine procedure in numerous settings because of the, "strikingly rich and accurate view of the family relations and dynamics that could be obtained with great economy of family and staff time" (1987, p. 83). Kwiatkowska's family art evaluation consists of a single meeting of all family members who are available. Family members are asked to draw six pictures, which include single and joint-family scribbles, free pictures, and a family portrait. A therapist directs the session, and a "participant observer" (i.e. an assistant) takes notes and may also make immediate relevant remarks and comments. Diagnostic clues and conclusions are drawn only from the pictures and the family interaction during the evaluation session. The average time of the session is approximately one and one half hours. If therapy proceeds, a second family art evaluation is scheduled after about six months to assess the changes that have occurred (pp. 83-128).

Belnick (1993) is an art therapist who works with families in crisis. She developed an intervention model based on family members' artwork that helps families identify and express their crisis-related feelings, explore their previous coping mechanisms, facilitate adaptive coping mechanisms, anticipate planning, and summarize their gains (p. 44). Some of the methods she used were to have family members do the following: draw events that happened both the day and the hour before they contacted the clinic; draw themselves as they feel inside and draw themselves as they imagine they look to their family; as a family, draw about how they coped with a similar situation in the past; draw images that describe different possible solutions to the problem; draw themselves and their family as they are now and as they would like to be in the future and draw pictures of how they will cope with their situation (pp. 28-30). Belnick found that, "the visual image worked powerfully to expose underlying crisis dynamics and make them available for verbal exploration" (p. 23). Of particular interest to her were the ways that a single art expression could help a family member attain goals that involved cognition and problem solving. She felt that this, "condensation accelerated the process of crisis resolution and, as such, became an invaluable asset to family crisis intervention -- where time is of the essence" (p. 44).

Artwork has also been incorporated into structural family therapy. Minuchin (1974), who is well known for his work in this area, refers to the family structure as an, "invisible set of rules that govern transactions" (p.52). He observed that functional families work best when:

- 1) clear boundaries are set between the nuclear family and their families of origin;
- 2) there are closed boundaries around the marital system to insure privacy;
- 3) boundaries clarify the parental dyad, but are accessible to children in parenting matters;
- 4) limitations also exist around the children subsystem, designating privileges and tasks according to the age of the siblings. Crossover alliances, triangulations, enmeshments, and diffused boundaries result in a dysfunctional family system. (p. 68)

Therapists have said that it is difficult for a therapist to recognize these invisible patterns in a family system, and Riley & Malchiodi (1994) suggest that artwork produced by family members will aid in the process. They explain:

The family most probably will not be aware that they expose the first and second levels of their transactions in their artwork. In their innocence, they inadvertently give the therapist through their art expressions access to knowledge that will ultimately lead to change in the dysfunctional patterns of interactions. (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, pp. 68-69)

The systemic approach to family therapy is well suited to the use of artwork. Among systemic family therapists, members of the Milan Group are predominant (Selvini-Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin, & Prata, 1978). Systemic therapy sees the family as operating within a system, and focuses on, "clarifying the connections between family members and perceptions of each family member concerning a particular event or situation" (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, p. 10). In this regard, artwork can help therapists and family members "see" many aspects of the family system in a unique manner. Family murals are often included, and members can comment on their roles, motivations and messages as reflected in their artwork (pp. 88-91).

Strategic family therapy also uses artwork in "diagnosis" (of family dynamics) and treatment. This therapy originated with members of the Mental Research Group (MRI) at Stanford, which included such people as Bateson, Jackson, Satir and Watzlawick. Strategic family therapy derives from Systems Theory, cybernetics and information theory, a major premise of which is: "all communication within the family takes place on two levels -- the first or surface level, and a second level called metacommunication" (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, pp. 10-11).

In this type of therapy, therapists have family members draw images of themselves communicating in different situations. They may even draw themselves within a family grouping, only to later "cut themselves out" in order to speculate how the other members would interact without them. Other pictures could depict how people looked when they were communicating specific feelings (pp. 103-111). In an example of a "paradox" situation, a therapist had a client draw himself in a despised situation, for example, one in which his mother was blaming him incessantly because he had not lived up to her expectations. He said he was plagued with feelings of guilt. The therapist then instructed the client to go home and ask people how he had failed them, to be aware of how he felt, and to then come back with his report to the therapist. In this situation, the client disliked the assignment, terminated it early, said he no longer wanted to please everyone, that the whole assignment had been a waste of time and that the therapist should not feel guilty about it because, "guilt is a waste of time" (pp. 113-116). Art therapy and strategic family therapy are similar in several ways:

Art therapy, in theory and practice, has always been strategic. We have long recognized the power of metaphor and its communicative potential. In using art as a therapeutic modality we have traditionally given directives and created conditions that encourage clients to experiment with change. When looking at art with our clients we quite literally frame and reframe their efforts, helping them find new meanings in their work. (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, p. 116)

In recent years there has been a movement towards social constructivism in family art therapy (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994). This approach is central to my present PCP based research in that it allows the families' perspectives and illustrations of reality to take a dominant role in the process of developing family constructs. In explaining constructivism, Watzlawick states:

The constructivist position holds that individuals do not discover "reality," rather, they *invent it*. Experience orders and organizes the environment; it does not directly reflect it. (Watzlawick, 1984, p. 25)

Inherent in this is that the meanings we construct of experiences in our lives constitute our reality. This construction is a creative process, which has limitations put on it by society and society's expectations. It also allows us to anticipate and direct our future. From the therapist's perspective, s/he acknowledges that her/his perceptions of reality (and therefore her/his perceptions of how s/he should direct her/his sessions) could impinge on the client's experience in therapy. Whereas the therapist has certain "lenses" through which s/he may view and interpret the client, the client also has her/his own perceptions of reality -- and the therapist needs to acknowledge this and to apply techniques, which focus on the client's reality in order to help her/him resolve her/his problems. In the constructivist's paradigm, this would involve the use of language or symbolisms that allow the client to interpret her/his "truths" and to reinvent them if necessary (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, pp. 18-20).).

It is a basic concept of constructivism that we can change our view of reality when it no longer fits; that the event itself is not reality; it is our view of it. Therefore, if our view is causing the problem, we can change it and thereby resolve the dilemma. In this vein, families also build up a world of "truths," which govern the family members' behaviours. However, when outside events affect various members in such a way that family truths are questioned, or are no longer applicable, dissension within the family can occur. In a related therapeutic situation, the therapist puts aside her/his biases of what a family is, and invites the family members to tell her/him about their family in their own language. By telling their stories, they let the therapist know about their family and their dissatisfactions with it. The therapist comes to know this by stepping back and having views about their views. This allows the therapist to consider many options for the family, to reframe events for them, to speak their language, and to better understand their reality. Anderson & Goolishian describe this situation:

The role of the therapist is that of master conversational artist -- an architect of dialogue whose expertise is in creating a space and facilitating a dialogical conversation. Just as systems are fluid, so are our ideas about them. Our theories, as well as our practice of therapy are meant as temporary lenses rather than representations that conform to a social reality. (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988, p. 372)

When families tell their stories, find new truths and anticipate new endings, they are reinventing their reality and coming closer to a successful resolution in therapy. Riley & Malchiodi (1994) feel that language often blocks this success. They explain that because families have "foreign" idiosyncratic languages -- understandable mostly to them -- it is difficult for a therapist to learn it (p. 21). This is why they recommend that the family create visual illustrations to tell their story. Riley & Malchiodi explain:

Pictures need few words and speak an international language. Art therapy is a bridge between the invented reality of the family and the ability of the art therapist to appreciate that reality. Not only the therapist, but other family members as well will "get the picture." Through art therapy the family is provided the opportunity to illustrate the family story and, aided by these illustrations, to discover a new, alternative ending to that legend. The introduction of the image followed by discussing the meanings of the art product encourages creativity and gives breadth, depth and excitement to the process of therapy. (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, p. 21)

Riley & Malchiodi suggest that art and constructivism are inherently connected in that art can be constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed; a process which also works for the family and can express and reframe their reality (1994). They also propose that once the art is done, the symbolic expressions assume a life

of their own. The art becomes another “observer” in that it allows family members to look at themselves as though they were outside of their situation, giving them a better chance to find new themes and new views (p. 35). In this way, social constructivism presents a philosophical framework for a therapy that allows family members to illustrate their own reality, and with the help of a therapist to reinvent a more appropriate one. As stated earlier, this framework is most applicable to my present research, where family members illustrate on paper their views of reality and subsume them into their shared family constructs.

As shown above, there are many advantages to having family members use artwork in therapeutic settings. Where there are hierarchies and boundaries, drawings have a way of equalizing everyone. This may give children an advantage that they would not normally have. Whatever the age, the facility to draw is there, and as was mentioned earlier, adult drawings are not that much different from children’s. Thus, communication can also be on a more equal level -- and perhaps quite a different one from which the family usually uses. Drawing is a language relatively uncensored by the family system and therefore it can promote freer expression. Old habits of communication can thus be broken or circumvented (Donnelly, 1992).

Drawings also have the potential to engage family members in joint interaction, to help them express themselves amongst each other, to allow feelings of accomplishment, and above all, to do this in a non-threatening atmosphere. Family drawing sets the stage for members to feel a sense of intimacy and to reassert their family’s uniqueness. Also, family drawing can promote fun, as when members see themselves in each other’s pictures and comment playfully upon it (Oster & Montgomery, 1996).

The current, widespread use of drawings in therapeutic settings is no doubt due to its effectiveness. Oster & Montgomery (1996) state, “of all the techniques used in achieving the goals of psychotherapy, drawings seem to accomplish the objectives of developing the individual’s expression and ability to relate in the easiest and richest fashion” (p. 27). They suggest that because people speak more than they draw, they are less likely to control or censure their drawings, which thereby allows them expression beyond their usual, narrow limits (p. 170).

The issue of thinking in pictures vs. words is a controversial one. Rollins (2000) looked at the function of mental imagery from a cognitive science perspective, and proposed that there are no logical or methodological reasons why the brain cannot store information in the form of pictures. Noting previous research, which showed quicker reaction times for people who responded to pictorial representations as compared to slower reaction times for those who responded to word representations, he stated:

One obvious advantage of pictorial representation would appear to be the ease with which it conveys information integrated into a unified whole. Its merit is simplicity and directness. To represent a scene verbally will require either a potentially infinite set of sentences or inferences from a selected set. To represent a scene pictorially, however, requires but a single picture, albeit a complex one; and the information it contains implicitly may be discovered in the representation without involving derivation in the sense of logical inference. (Rollins, 2000, pp. 19-20)

As indicated above, many reasons have been put forth to explain the effectiveness of art as a form of expression. The answer may lie in parts of all of them. My present research employed the use of drawings and reflections as a method to help family members better understand the meanings inherent in their views of reality

as related to their family and their subsequent development of shared family constructs. I believe that drawings facilitated this process of understanding.

Drawings also empower people in therapy. Oftentimes initially, clients view the therapist as having answers to their problems, and expect that the therapist will supply a magic solution. When drawings are introduced early in the course of therapy, a strong message is delivered to the clients that *they* will be responsible for therapeutic change. This immediately diffuses the focus of the relationship and allows freer movement within treatment (Oster & Montgomery, 1996, pp. 115-116). Drawings also empower people in that they experience themselves as an integral part of their therapy. For example, their artwork is tangible proof that they are there and that they are important enough to have been asked to participate in such a tangible way. Further, they are told that the art materials are for their benefit, to use in whichever way they choose. Finally, they will see that they and their illustrations are honoured in that they become the focus of attention while their creations are being discussed. This happened in my research, where family members seemed proud to take ownership of their completed drawings by explaining them to each other, and by confidently defending their choice of representations when questioned by other family members. Also, most members liked their drawings and asked me to let them take them home at the end of the session -- to put on the refrigerator or fireplace mantel. One family wanted the drawings for their family archives! This historical aspect is also relevant to the family therapist, who can use the family's drawings as a permanent record of each person's activities in therapy, as a way to review recurring themes and progress, and as a tool in consulting with other therapy team members.

### **3.2 Use of Reflections with Drawings**

The use of drawings can enhance therapeutic effectiveness. However, as shown above, art is seldom used alone, and the question can be asked as to what is to be gained or lost by the verbalizations, discussions or reflections that accompany the art product. Riley & Malchiodi explore this topic:

Progress towards change is manifest in the dialogue between the therapist and client in reference to the expressive product. This leads to the inquiry: does the discourse exploring the art expression demonstrate that there can be an awareness of both first and second level meaning simultaneously in therapy? One must still grapple with the paradox that although descriptive language is created by the client/family, they are bound by their linguistic structures in the verbal expression of these views. The art therapy product may be thought to lie between these two levels of reality. It is created primarily to reflect the clients' personal views, but is forced to accommodate language when attempts are made to reveal or interpret its meaning.

...Hearing client's language does not negate the process of looking at the art product. It is a synthesis of two creative means of communication. The union of the client's oral story and the illustrations of their story gives a depth and dimension, which introduces new constructs into the client's recursive, symptom-bound tale. (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, pp. 45-47)

Wadeson (1980) also prefers eliciting the family's commentary. She acknowledges that although there are people who can derive clarity and direction through their art expression alone, "many others whose art expression was minimal or undeveloped...achieved important insights and changes in themselves through reflecting on their images" (p. 6).

When used within a family group session, “discussing the illustrations stimulates the language and the conversation in the family. There is a better chance to find new themes, new histories, create an alternate view of their problem, to create a new reality” (Riley & Malchiodi, 1994, p. 35). Gilroy & Lee state that, “talking does not make the world or even pictures, but talking and pictures participate in making each other and the world as we know them” (1995, p. 194). Oster & Montgomery concur and give their perspective:

The creations produced and the interpretations and discussions surrounding them provide rich potential for discovery and psychological growth. The settings and the structure may vary, but images *are* sometimes worth “a thousand words.” When images are combined with words, the best of both worlds are brought together. (Oster & Montgomery, 1996, p. 27)

Images and their associated verbal interpretations/reflections can therefore help give meaning to experiences. In this thesis, family members’ reflections of their drawings aid in the process of developing shared family constructs. Here reflections are defined as a mental process in which one consults oneself and gives meaning to what one has thought or done.

Reflections can also create a basis for change. This is particularly true in the clinical setting, where thoughts and actions are explored. Within the tenets of his Personal Construct Theory, Kelly (1955a) used reflections in many different ways as part of his clinical methodology. One specific instance is his analysis of clients’ raw verbal protocol, particularly the protocol produced by clients asked to characterize themselves. In this situation, Kelly realized that some statements could mean one thing as an independent declaration, and another thing when taken within the context of the whole protocol. Kelly would then pursue the latter, trying to find greater meanings (p. 130). In another context, Kelly would review a session with a client by reflecting upon what had occurred, thus helping to give the client reassurance that s/he had been listened to, and/or to help, “provide a frame of reference in which the client may construe a changing outlook” (p. 973). Another way that Kelly used reflections was to repeat back to the client key words that the client had used. This would have the effect of the client thinking s/he was being questioned, and s/he would therefore proceed to elaborate on the words, thus giving more meaning to what s/he had been discussing (p. 970). Many of the reflecting techniques used by Kelly are similar to those found in current psychotherapies.

Reflections can allow a person to focus on her/himself. They can, “lead the client to think of the feelings and ideas being expressed as part of one’s own personality and not outside one’s self” (Brammer, Abrego & Shostrom, 1993, p. 114). This is an essential concept of Carl Rogers’ (1951) Client-Centered Therapy, in which the focus is on the client taking responsibility for her/himself. Rogers felt that reflections helped the client explore her/his feelings and her/himself, gain greater clarity and understanding, and thus take more responsibility for her/his life. Existential therapists have also found reflecting techniques useful in their couples and family counselling sessions (Sharf, 2000). For existentialists, in these sessions, the focus is on the individuals becoming aware of the relationships amongst themselves, as well as their own sense of being-in-the-world. It is felt that this awareness can then lead to family change, with new patterns of living being created. In order to help clients become more aware of their partner’s world as well as their own, a therapist can conduct a session with one partner, while the other partner observes and says nothing. The observing partner will then reflect on what s/he has seen and heard. Partners can take turns observing and reflecting, thus helping to promote an awareness of themselves and their relationship (p. 230).

Another example of reflections being used in order to help family members become more aware of themselves is one in which narrative therapy techniques are employed. Within this theoretical approach, Tom Andersen's (1993) method is called the "Reflecting Team." Using this approach, Andersen has therapists watching the session through a one-way mirror. At some point, Andersen will stop the session and ask the professionals for comments on what has been happening. During this discussion, the family and therapist can listen to the professionals, and then later the family members can discuss their own views on what they heard the professionals saying about the earlier part of the session. This sharing of impressions allows the family to consider different perspectives on the way they act, and to perhaps develop a new story about their family.

In essence, there are many effective uses of reflections in a therapeutic setting. Brammer, Abrego & Shostrom (1993) summarize some possible reasons for this effectiveness; reflection helps the individual to feel deeply understood, helps them to see that feelings can be the causes of behaviour, keeps the locus of evaluation within themselves, gives them the feeling that they can have the power of choice, clarifies their thinking and helps them examine their deep motives (pp. 120-122). In my research, family members often appeared to display these aspects as they reflected upon their drawings of their family. It was not uncommon for members to show emotions as they described their family, their place in it, and how they wanted it to be. Nor was it unusual to hear them say why they acted certain ways within the family unit. It also appeared, from the comments of the other family members, that the one doing the reflecting was being understood. This seemed to help the family as a unit better understand themselves as they developed their shared family constructs.

As discussed above, drawings and reflections go hand in hand. In a clinical situation, the client owns her/his creations and her/his expressions thereof. It is important that the client give the interpretations of her/his artwork, because it is s/he, alone, who truly knows them. A therapist can encourage, but should be subtle and non-interfering. This is a general rule among therapists, whether they are traditional clinicians or those trained specifically in art therapy (Naumburg, 1966; Gilroy & Lee, 1995).

### ***3.2.1 Applicability of Drawings and Reflections to Personal Construct Psychology***

Drawings and reflections are suited to the development of family constructs within the PCP model. Constructs are about a person's view and anticipation of his reality, and the originator of PCP (Kelly, 1955a) was open to various methods of arriving at constructs. Procter (1978) and Dallos (1991) built on this and developed different ways of helping people understand themselves and their families. These new ways were useful in facilitating constructions. Most methods of construct development involve oral or written communications between the clinician and client. Ravenette (1999) used both oral and drawing methods to elicit individual constructs with children by having them draw a picture and its opposite and then explaining them. He used polarities reflected in these drawings to help gain therapeutic insights (p. 128). With families, Procter and Dallos placed special emphasis on oral reflecting, which Kelly had used with individuals.

Drawings and reflections can enhance the process of construct development. It is a method whereby meanings are developed and expressed, and it thereby honours the basic philosophy of PCP. It adheres to the theory, but introduces a new method of eliciting constructs.

Drawings and reflections make PCP more accessible to children and adults alike. It is particularly useful for families. PCP is a strong theory that has stood the test of time. It is known for its diverse fields of psychological inquiry and its usefulness in the clinical community. Drawings and reflections add a useful component to it. Because people change, and because the meanings they ascribe to their perceptions and actions



also change, it is assumed that their family constructs would also change somewhat over time. Therefore, it is expected that these changes would be noticeable in family members' associated drawings and reflections. Related to this assumption, there is also the interesting notion that the meanings we ascribe to art in general can change. McNiff (2000), an art researcher, states that art expressions reveal themselves to us over time, and that in this ongoing process of creation, "an image can never have a final and fixed meaning" (p. 128). This idea fits nicely with PCP's fundamental concept of ongoing change, and with Kelly, who said, "there is nothing in the world which is not subject to some form of reconstruction" (1955b, p. 937).

This chapter was premised on the fact that there has been no research in the area of what this thesis intends to explore: the use of drawings and reflections in conjunction with Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) in the development of shared family constructs. It introduced this study's prospective method of participants drawing representations of their families, putting their meanings into words, and these words then being placed into Procter's (1996) Perceiver Element Grid (PEG) in order to form initial constructs. The research presented suggested that drawings may facilitate a client's elicitation of meanings because it is more direct and easy to draw images to portray thoughts than it is to choose words to describe them. It also showed that all forms of civilization have used drawings to depict thoughts, feelings and actions, and that the level of children's drawings are similar to those of most adults. Additionally, research demonstrated that many different types of therapies have included the use of drawings in their assessments and treatment, including psychoanalytic, behavioural, developmental, humanistic, existential and phenomenological. Art-based techniques were also found to be used in family therapies such as structural, systemic and strategic, as well as social constructivist -- in which PCP and this study have their theoretical roots. In family therapies, research showed that drawings could help family members to communicate more freely and richly, and to equalize boundaries and hierarchies amongst themselves. It also suggested that the combination of drawings and verbal reflections could give depth and dimension to a client's story, or to a new reality. Research showed that Kelly had used reflections as an agent of change in his PCP applications, just as other clinicians had used them in their theoretically different orientations. This indicated that the combined method of using drawings and reflections could be useful in the development of family constructs within the PCP model, and formed the groundwork for the following chapters that present the research method and results.

## CHAPTER IV: AIMS AND GUIDING PROPOSITIONS

This chapter describes the basic aspects, aims and guiding propositions of the present study. It sets the stage for the following chapter, which presents the various approaches used in the research and an explanation of the related methods.

This will be an *exploratory* study which will examine families' experiences of the combined approach of drawings, related reflections and behaviours in the development of shared family constructs. It is a form of *psychotherapy process research*, which examines the ways that meanings are constructed, experiences of those involved, and how those meanings and experiences come together in the development and presentation of constructs. It is a *hybrid therapeutic approach* turned into a research study with non-clinical families.

This thesis aims to build some theoretical development of our understanding of family dynamics, visual expression and construing. No research has combined all three of these aspects in this way, and as such the present study addresses some gaps in current knowledge, with the proposition that a new method of developing family constructs could be useful in clinical settings.

The study was pursued on the basis of my clinical practice, and interest in Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Psychology (PCP), Procter's (1981) Family Construct System (FCS), and various family and art-oriented therapies. Kelly's theory suited my clinical beliefs. He saw people's views of reality as the perceptions and meanings that guide them. He explained how these meanings could be clinically developed into an individual's personal constructs: their views of reality. Procter (1981, 1996) and Dallos (1991) expanded upon Kelly's theory, showing that *family* constructs could also be developed, using written or verbal methods.

This study proposes a new *drawing-oriented* method of developing family constructs, a method which builds on PCP and FCS models in an attempt to enhance family therapies. Art-oriented methods have been used in many types of treatment settings (Oster & Montgomery, 1996) and it has been shown that using drawings in family therapy helps family members become more aware of the meanings that they ascribe to their family, thereby achieving more of their treatment goals (Donnelly, 1992). However, there has been no research that has combined art-oriented methods with PCP in the development of shared family constructs.

The above combination of a sound PCP theoretical basis and a related clinical method appealed to my therapeutic orientation and became the core of my research propositions. In my clinical work with family members I had encouraged them to draw and explain pictures of their family so that they could become more aware of the meanings that they were applying to their family, and thus have a better understanding of their family dynamics. My position had been that it was the *client's* meanings -- and not mine -- that were to be considered in the explanations of their art. I was therefore engaging in a constructivist-oriented therapy in which I was employing art-directed methods. However, I wanted to add more substance to the structure. In the process, I arrived at my current research design.

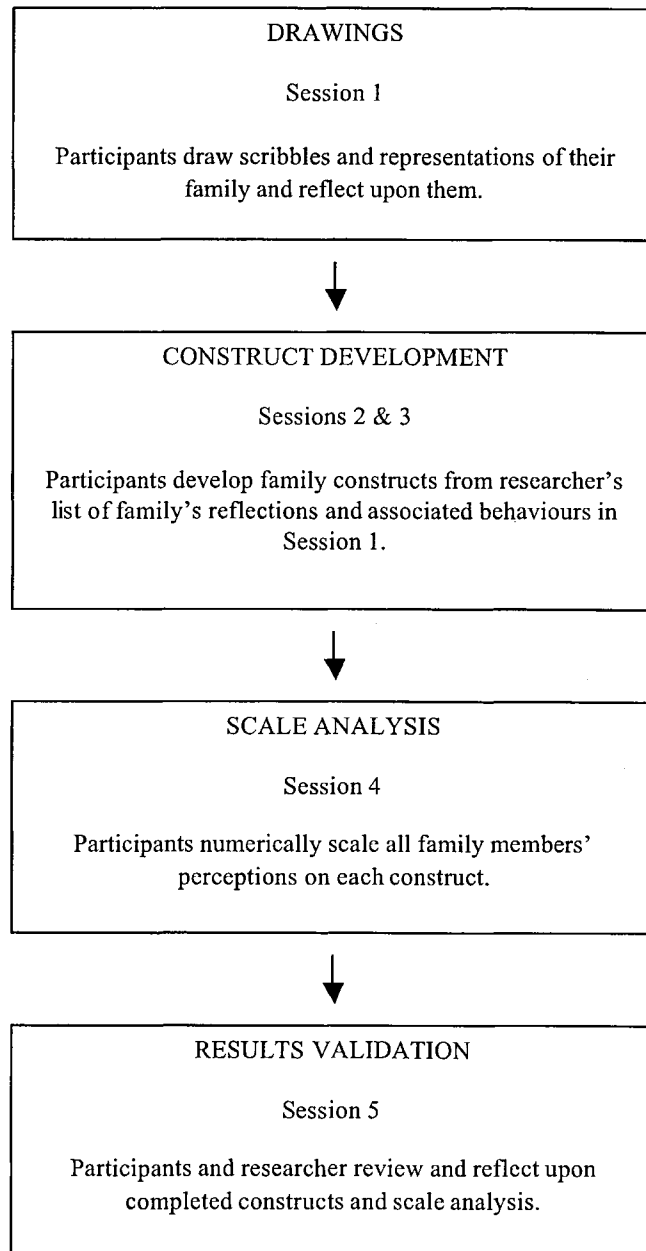
This chapter has given an overview of the aims and guiding propositions of the present study. It has described the various research approaches that will be employed in the exploration of a new method of family construct development. Major research approaches were shown to be qualitative and ethnographic, with an interpretative phenomenological orientation being employed in the theme analysis. The next chapter describes research stages, rationale, methods, and the components of the analysis.

## CHAPTER V: METHOD

This chapter outlines the stages of the present research, describes the components and rationale of the analyses and explains the method. It sets the stage for the next chapter, which presents research results.

### 5.1 Stages of Research

The four stages of research, which involved the participation of myself and family members over five sessions, are summarized in Figure 5.1: Stages of research in family sessions.



*Figure 5.1. Stages of research in family sessions*

## 5.2 Orientation

This study is largely ethnographic in its orientation: the distinguishing feature being that it is interpretative and participative. I have found that involvement with families is necessary to help get at the subtleties of their understandings, therefore, this concept is a basis of the present research. This is in keeping with my own belief that it is the *client's* view of reality that is of central importance in the communications between the client and therapist, and that a therapist's interactive stance with the client helps her/him better understand and express meanings attached to her/his reality.

I further believe that it is only by both parties participating in a collaborative, interpretative manner that therapeutic progress can be made: the client expresses thoughts, the therapist interprets and encourages more insight, the client responds/clarifies and the therapist continues on this path. In the search for the client's meanings of the situation at hand this joint collaboration is reinforcing to both the client and the therapist. In the process, each person learns more about the other, and the connection between them often becomes more trusting. This in turn allows more understanding and aids the interpretative process as well as the session's outcome. This is my construction of a healthy client-therapist engagement, which has strong ethnographic underpinnings and which I have adapted to the present study.

Ethnography has been defined as, "the comparative, descriptive analysis of the everyday, of what is taken for granted" (Toren, 1996, p. 102). Originally, it was a term applied to the analytical descriptions produced by anthropologists describing the lives of people in various cultures. A primary method of data gathering is still that of *participant observation*, which is, "directed towards the analysis of contemporary collective processes as these are manifest in the day-to-day relations between particular persons" (p. 103). The research environment is often intense, with the investigator being described, in the same instance, as both a participant and as a questioning observer of their own and other's participation in ordinary events (p.103). Ethnographic investigators can also be referred to as, "almost like the data, the writing, the observing, and are implicated in their product as when a craftsman and his tools merge for a product" (p. 113). This example particularly relates to the present study, where I merged with my participants to discuss and interpret the meanings they gave to their drawings, and where together, we co-constructed their shared family constructs. Like other ethnographers, I "ventured alone into an unknown world, engaging with people to be studied" (p.103).

## 5.3 Design

Other components of the present research design include: psychotherapy process research, case study research, Personal Construct Psychology research, interpretative theme analysis and observational research. More broadly, the design is largely qualitative and ethnographic.

Both quantitative and qualitative models were considered. Most generally, the quantitative view is seen as being experimental, hypothetico-deductive, positivist and realist, and the qualitative approach as naturalistic, contextual and constructionist (Hammersley, 1996, p.160). Some see the basic difference in these two approaches as being in their fundamentally opposing paradigms, with only one being the true way. Others see the two as being alternatives, where each is true in its own terms, and where the choice between them is a matter of taste or personal preference. Smith (1996), whose qualitative theme analysis is used in this study, takes the latter view, although he makes it clear which paradigm *he* regards as superior (Hammersley, 1996, pp. 160-161).

Research models are often chosen on the basis of the type of instrument or sort of interpretation that is most appropriate to the situation, circumstances and opportunities, therefore it is not uncommon to find both quantitative and qualitative methods used in the same study (Woolgar, 1996, p. 15). This was certainly the case in the present research, where amongst several qualitative analyses, a quantitative scaling method was employed to rate family member's placements on their shared family constructs. An overview of current research approaches is presented in the following:

Science can be considered to be neither a unitary set of methods and procedures nor a universal practice. What counts as 'science' varies over time (philosophically, historically and sociologically) and is illusive. It is more useful to understand 'scientific method' as an evaluative repertoire than as an universal procedure (Woolgar, 1996, p. 19).

I have chosen a predominately qualitative approach because many of its common features apply to my research. Some of these features are: it typically reports linguistic rather than exclusively numeric results, uses empathy with participants as an observation strategy, interprets observations contextually and polydimensionally, has interpretations that are often tentative rather than lawlike, reveals investigators orientation and personal involvement in the research, and is not so much looking for objective truth of statements but to the understanding by people (Stiles, 1981, pp. 594-598). Most of these features are inherent in the present study, and a further discussion of the specific research types employed will provide examples of these features.

A combination of research approaches have been used in this study. I employed them in order to explore the process of family art therapy combined with a constructivist orientation, and in a recursive way this evolved into a potential, new form of therapy/evaluation with families.

Amongst the approaches used, *psychotherapy process research* gave an overview of procedures and allowed insight into the participants' experiences of the sessions. *Case study research* explored the uniqueness of each family within their own meaning systems/contexts, while giving a holistic, ecologically valid and comprehensive account of its structure. The developmental nature of this type of research -- explaining events over time -- added important information about each family's changing profile. *Personal Construct Theory research* formed the underpinnings of the development of shared family constructs, *Interpretative Theme Analysis* was used to explore meanings and topics related to the shared family constructs, and *observational research* noted behaviours related to the drawings and interactions of family members. In all of these approaches, *ethnography principles* guided my activities as a participant-observer-researcher. A *comparative design* aspect was also inherent in that different types of families were involved in the research. For example, both intact and non-intact families participated although comparisons between them were not directly investigated.

Underlying all approaches was the fact that the study was a *collaborative* one. Participants co-constructed the analysis with me. I engaged in an interpretative relationship, which is the basis of the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) used in this study. Smith's (1996) IPA perspective is as follows:

The assumption here is that the analyst is interested in learning something about the respondent's psychological world. This may be in the form of beliefs and constructs that are made manifest or suggested by the respondent's talk or it may be that the analyst holds that the respondent's story can itself be said to represent a piece of his or her identity (Smith, 1995). Either way, meaning is central and the aim is to try to understand the content and complexity of those meanings rather than take some

measure of frequency. This involves the investigator engaging in an interpretive relationship with the transcript. While one is attempting to capture and do justice to the meanings of the respondent, to learn about his or her mental and social world, those meanings are not transparently available, they must be obtained through a sustained engagement...and a process of interpretations. This aspect of analysis is captured in the term 'interpretative phenomenological analysis', which I use to describe the way I work (Smith, 1991, 1994, 1995a). (Smith, 1996, p. 265)

Like all research, qualitative research can be biased, and the question arises as to whether researcher attitudes or behaviours can contribute to the invalidation of results. In IPA, the attitudes, beliefs and concerns of both the researcher and the participants are *revealed* in the interactions of the interpretive process. Potential biases then become a *subject* of the inquiry and not a hidden factor, thereby promoting the elicitation of the participant's actual meanings of the material. Regarding researcher's preconceptions in general, Stiles (1981) has suggested that researcher involvement can specifically hinder the researcher's preconceptions by promoting a, "dialectical process by which observations tend to permeate and change an investigator's initial views. This response to observer bias represents a sharp departure from the received view that the possibility of bias invalidates a research finding" (p.614).

In the present study, a semi-longitudinal design was undertaken in order to meet research goals that required a specific amount of time to be achieved. Sessions were reasonably short so that participants would not tire but would rather maintain a good concentration level. Shorter sessions over a longer period of time gave family members a break between meetings, and also allowed sufficient time to reach research goals. All sessions were to be focussed on the development of shared family constructs, and not on therapy. However, because of the clinical environment and the nature of the process -- for example, participants' reflecting on themselves and their families -- it was expected that therapeutic issues could arise. In such situations, therapy was not to be actively pursued, and discussions were to be directed back to the research process.

#### **5.4 Participants**

Ten families participated. Family size ranged from 2 to 6 members (average = 4) with a total of 37 members of families participating. The total sample included 17 males and 20 females. Children ranged in age from 4 to 19 years (average = 11) and parents from 26 to 57 years (average = 44). Families with children less than 4 years of age were not considered for the study as research tasks required abilities and stamina that younger children may not have (e.g. the ability to consider and answer many questions over several hours). Families were paid modestly to participate and were recruited by advertisements posted within local colleges and universities. Eight of the ten families were Canadian, and all parents had post-secondary education. There were two basic types of families: five nuclear families in which the mother and father were married and living together in the same home; and five single parent families. The single parents included two widows, one divorced female, one never married lesbian, and one divorced male who co-parented with his former wife (who lived in a separate home on the same university campus as her former husband).

Two female research assistants also participated. One was an art therapist, and the other a graduate psychology student. They were recruited from within local professional and academic communities and responded to my personal request to have them assist in the study. Their roles included administrative and observer tasks whilst I was engaged with the families. In the administrative role, they assisted with the physical

set up of the clinic. In their roles as observers, they recorded notes on the family interactions that they observed in the family sessions. These interactions included any family-oriented verbal or physical interactions; for example, talking to other family members, moving towards, away from, or in conjunction with them. Videotaping was also employed to record interactions, but this method was often found to be technically unreliable and so the key observational method became that of note-taking by the assistants. The assistants were trained by me in research tasks during several pre-study pilot sessions, where participants drew and developed constructs in ways similar to those in this study.

## **5.5 Materials**

Art supplies and recording equipment were used. Art supplies included pieces of 18" x 24" white paper, coloured pencils, felt markers, oil and chalk pastels, and a table on which to draw. Recording equipment consisted of a standard video recorder and tripod along with videotapes, pens, paper pads, and a presentation easel.

## **5.6 Procedure**

Previous to the initial research session, I met with individual parents and explained the basic outline of my research as well as the type of tasks and amount of time involved. I explained to them that results would be confidential, that they or their children could decide at any time to leave the project and that any of their work up to that point would be deleted. I also stated that, should it be desired, my counselling would be offered free to their family members over a reasonable period of time. I explained that I would pay a modest fee to each person for their research involvement and would keep their drawings safe; returning them after my research was completed. I then asked them to discuss this information with their children before seeking their involvement, and to assure them that they could leave the research at any time without any recrimination from either the parents or me. After this first meeting, I met with them again, at which time they signed the consent form.

Families involved in the research attended approximately five three-hour sessions over a period of six months. The first session was held in a clinic, with subsequent sessions held in the family's home.

## **5.7 First Family Session**

At the first clinic session, I reviewed the purpose and confidentiality aspects of the research with the participants, described generally what each person's involvement in the research would be, and asked them individually if they wished to proceed. I reminded them that at any time they could ask me questions or stop their involvement, and assured the children that this applied to them, too, and that they only needed to tell their parents or me should they wish to leave the project.

To start the research, family members sat around a table with a piece of paper in front of each one of them. They were instructed to choose their drawing instrument, quickly draw a scribble on their paper, and title it. Then they were asked to look at each family member's scribble and collectively decide which scribble they would develop and draw into a jointly produced picture. A period of twenty minutes was allocated for decision-making and drawing. After completing this group drawing and titling it, family members were asked to individually draw and title another picture which was to be a personal representation of their family.

Members then explained all of their drawings and were asked to comment or ask questions about any of the drawings. I facilitated by asking questions and encouraging discussion. All behaviours surrounding the members' drawings, verbalizations, and interactions were recorded by video and by assistants' note-taking. The session, which was approximately two hours in duration, then ended and the family went home.

The assistants' roles in this stage of the research included setting up the room and materials prior to the session. This provided a calming effect on the arriving members. The assistants also engaged in observational note-taking of the session, situating themselves on either side of the room. Interactions amongst assistants and other participants were minimal and family members soon became used to the presence of the assistants and focussed on the drawing activities.

### **5.8 Post-Session Analysis: Perceiver-Element Grid & Construct Development**

After the first session, I discussed with the assistants their observations of each family member's drawings, associated reflections and other behaviours. Information in notes and videotapes aided the process. We looked for unique and interesting aspects, whether in colour or form, in each of the drawings. We also noted the way that family members went about their tasks and how they interacted with other family members. Findings were recorded as short, descriptive phrases.

These phrases were then placed in a table representing Procter's (1996) Perceiver-Element Grid (PEG) (see Appendix B, Table B5.1). The grid has columns (elements) and rows (perceivers) that correspond to the number of members in a specific family. Across the top of the grid, each family member's name heads a column. There is also an additional column titled, 'Family.' Down the left-hand side of the grid, each family member's name is again listed, providing one row for each member. When completed, the grid includes a column and a row for each member, as well as a column for the family. Thus, a family of two members would have a grid of three columns and two rows. When the grid is complete, each row depicts a self-view from each member, as well as that member's view of other family members. Each column shows how all members are viewed by each family member. The last column shows how each family member views their family as a unit.

In Procter's (1996) grids, he used information from repertory grids and from verbal responses, having asked family members how they saw themselves, each other, and the family as a whole. In the present research, the initial PEG contained information from each family member's drawings, reflections, and related behaviours as recorded by videotape and observers. For example, if the mother had been drawn as the largest figure and was explained by a daughter as the most important person in the family, this was noted in the grid under the column headed, 'Mother,' and across the row entitled, 'Daughter.' It would also be noted in the column, 'Family.' The comment written would be the daughter's perception of the mother: 'most important in the family,' and would also relate to the daughter's perception of the family. If a child sat on her mother's lap the entire time, this would be noted as, 'Mary and her mother are close.' In this instance, impressions of the mother as important in the family and as close to the daughter are portrayed in several columns.

Regarding impressions of the family, if another member aggressively used black chalk to completely obscure the family's joint drawing, this was recorded in the appropriate rows and columns (e.g. those titled 'John' and 'Family') regarding that individual as, 'John blacks out the family.' This occurred in the same family where one daughter drew and described the family as, 'a circus with nobody around,' and another member drew it as, 'a truck going nowhere.' Therefore, a preliminary summary of that family -- as indicated by their drawings and actions -- was, 'The family is an empty circus, blackened by John and going nowhere.' When completed, the grid therefore described the members' portrayals of themselves and other family members, as well as their perceptions of the family as a whole.

After these impressions were all listed in the family grid, the basic elements were then summarized more explicitly. In this process, the researcher noted all phrases recorded in each PEG column. Similar or redundant



concepts were combined, lengthy ones were shortened, and those that were not specifically related to the family's impressions of themselves were deleted (see Appendix B, Table B5.2). All remaining phrases in the PEG columns were then summarized and separated into several individual, explicit phrases, which formed the first version of a set of emergent constructs (see Appendix B Table B5.3). These constructs became a basis for the family's further development of their complete construct system.

In this stage of the research, the assistants contributed and reflected on information from their observational notes of the initial session, collaborating with me on my compiling of the family's grid. The collaborations between me and my assistants are examples of the process of interpretative interactions which are employed at different stages of the study, and which allowed a spontaneous, dynamic way of understanding and sharing the meanings that were portrayed in the participants' actions.

### **5.9 Subsequent Family Sessions**

Usually, four later sessions were held at the family's home, with larger families requiring additional time. All sessions were recorded by video and note-taking. In the early sessions, further development of individual and shared family constructs was pursued. I encouraged family members to exchange opinions back and forth, to reflect on their drawings and previous thoughts and to explore, adjust, and expand the constructs into a set of bipolar constructs, which they felt represented them. For example, a tentative emergent construct of one family was, 'frenetic, empty and dark.' However, after further family meetings and discussions, the family developed this construct into an emergent shared family construct of, 'crazy, empty and alone' and a submergent one of, 'calm, together and caring.' The final constructs were of their own choosing. After all constructs had been decided, I recorded them on an easel pad.

After the constructs were completed, a set of questions were asked in order to elicit discussion on specific topics relating to how family members construed the outside world in relation to themselves. These questions, which were adapted from Dallos (1991, pp. 137-139), helped members to better understand the uniqueness of their family, as well as the meanings involved in their choice of shared family constructs.

After this, a grid-scale analysis of the family constructs was undertaken. This identified the intensity of each construct for each member across the family and also indicated similarities or conflicts within the constructs.

Assistants helped at this stage of the research by again setting up rooms and materials prior to the sessions and by taking observational notes during them. The prepared set up provided a calm, structured environment for the tasks at hand, and the observational notes assisted in the later grid-scale analysis.

### **5.10 Scale Analysis**

From the group of shared family constructs, one complete construct at a time was analyzed in a grid similar to Procter's (1996) PEG. The major difference between Procter's grid and the present one was that whereas Procter had used descriptive words to note similarities and differences, the present research asked family members to *numerically scale* individual and family perceptions on each of the shared family constructs that they had just developed. Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin & Prata (1980) had previously shown that families could rate themselves on various dimensions important to the family, and Dallos (1991) incorporated this idea into a family grid based upon least-most circular questioning. In this procedure, he used numbers as a rating tool and asked family members to:

...rate each other on dimensions that they see as important to the family, such as who appears *least* and *most* worried or upset. Such information can be employed to build up a family grid which can be displayed to the family. The elements can be each member of the family and significant others. The constructs can be the dimensions that have emerged from the family's vocabulary as the session/s has been proceeding. (Dallos, 1991, p. 133).

This type of numerical rating is valuable in that it allows family members to see a more objective analysis of who is important in the family on various aspects (Dallos, 1991, p. 134).

In order to obtain a self-rating from each member on each construct, as well as a rating indicating how each member thought the other members would view her/himself on that construct, the present research used a Likert Scale format. In this method, the emergent pole was rated as 1 and the submergent pole as 4. For example, the construct, 'active-lazy' would have, 'active' = 1 and 'lazy' = 4. Each family member would then assign a number indicating her/his self-view of the family on that construct, and would assign another number for what was thought to be each family member's view on that particular construct. Thus, if the member-rater chose 2, that member perceived the family as being somewhat active, whereas if the member thought the father would pick 4, then that member's view was that the father saw the family as lazy. Therefore, each family member, based on a self-perception of the family and its members, would give a scaled response for a particular construct and person.

By using this type of rating on the constructs, it was possible to observe each person's view of the construct, and also how intense that view was across the family. For example, if everyone had rated the construct, 'active – lazy' as 4, it could then be determined that this was a unanimous, pooled perception of the family on that construct. By contrast, if the ratings were divided, it may also help identify where dissimilarities or conflict in a family might be. For example, if the mother thought the family was lazy, and everyone else thought it was active, that might signal an important family issue.

The complete family was present as each member gave their individual ratings on each construct. I therefore assumed that each family member would be aware of the other members' responses and have their own responses affected by them. Feixas, Procter & Neimeyer (1992) have suggested that this is inherent in an interview situation where a family is constructing their reality (their Family Construct System). Feixas *et al.* see that everyone in the room --including the interviewer-- is affected by the questions and answers, which have a confirmatory effect on the family members and on their family's organization, thus creating a "return-effect" (p. 152). Deissler (1987) explains that a question to one also sets off a "subconscious search" within the other members of the family, whereby they implicitly define their relationships to the others (pp. 28-29). Because the present study involved the development of shared family constructs, and because the design was interactive, interpretative, collaborative and constructivist, it was expected that the above effects would occur within it.

After the session, the responses of the family members were placed in construct-related tables (see Appendix B, Tables B5.5-B5.9) and information from these grids was then used in a theme analysis of the shared family constructs. At this stage of the research, assistants again engaged in administrative and observational note-taking tasks, providing a professional and supportive environment.

### 5.11 Theme Analysis

The four stages of the theme analysis are summarized in Figure 5.2: Theme analysis within- and across-families.

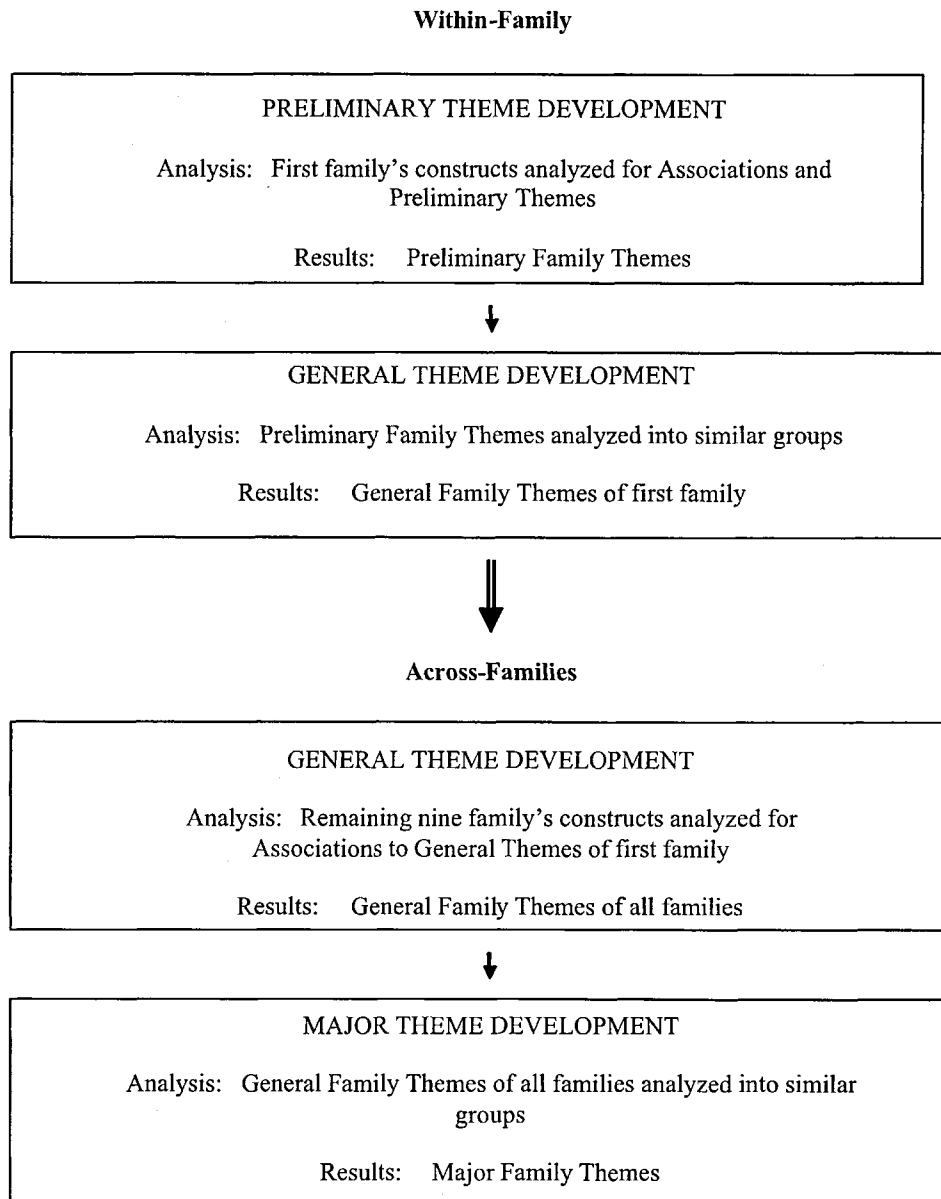


Figure 5.2. Theme analysis within - and across-families

The method of analysis was similar to that of Smith, Jarman & Osborne (1996), but the type of data was different. Whereas Smith *et al.* (1996) had analyzed data from transcripts of individual interviews; the present research analyzed transcribed construals of each family's clinic drawings, reflections and associated behaviours. Transcribed information associated with the development of these construals was also considered. The specific material employed was the list of shared family constructs that each family had developed. Each family's set of

shared constructs consisted of emergent and submergent poles that represented the family's pooled perceptions of how they viewed their family as a whole, or how they made sense of their family. Both poles of each family's constructs were analyzed. The family's development of their constructs was facilitated by each member's initial involvement in the study, when participants completed their individual and family drawings, and reflections thereof. This process has been described in detail in an earlier section. The analysis therefore proceeded as follows: art process → family constructs → family themes.

The analysis had two levels. The first was a preliminary 'within-family' analysis consisting of an interpretative theme analysis of one family, in order to ascertain a base line of general themes, which could then be used as a reference point for the second level of analysis. The second level was an 'across-families' analysis, which determined general and major family themes across the total group of families. This type of analysis followed an idiographic, case-study approach, beginning with specific examples and building up to more general groupings (Smith, Harre & Langenhove, 1995). Smith *et al.* (1995) found that this type of analysis worked well with studies which employed a small sample size of about ten participant units, "small enough for one to retain an overall mental picture of each of the individual cases and the location of themes within them" (p. 225). The present study meets these criteria, with ten participant families

In the within-family analysis, the emergent and submergent shared family constructs of a specific family were listed and placed in a table. Following phenomenological theme analysis procedures used by Smith, Jarman & Osborne (1996), interpretive associations were developed for each construct, and for preliminary themes emerging from the associations. In this method, the families' shared constructs were listed in the middle of a table, and in the left-hand margin, anything that was interesting or significant about a construct was noted. Constructs were read and re-read closely in order to become more aware of meanings and associations connected to them. Observational notes and videotapes from the family sessions were also consulted in order to ensure that each comment/association was represented in the transcripts, and that my own possible biases had not distorted the process. In the process I would be attempting to understand meanings in the constructs, in addition to interpreting the material in order to establish some order from the associations that were extracted from the constructs. Thus, comments in the left margin could be associations or connections seemingly inherent in the constructs, summarizations, or simply some initial interpretations. The right hand margin was used to note essential qualities and possible themes that were emerging from the associations in the left-hand margin.

For example, in the first case study, there was the shared family construct, 'Not Connected to Each Other.' In the theme analysis, some associations (written in the left-hand margin) of this construct were: Family = individuals, Family is defined, Similar to dad's negative view of bio family, Connected to the past, and Value-laden. Emerging preliminary themes from these associations (noted in the right hand margin) were: Family definition, The past, and Traditional values. The right-hand margin therefore had synthesized the left-hand margin into preliminary themes (see Appendix B, Table B5.10). At this point, the preliminary themes were not final: they were only documentations of important concepts to be used in the next stage of the theme analysis, which further summarized all topics from all of the first family's constructs.

After all of the constructs from the first family had been analyzed, their preliminary themes were placed in a separate table, where similarities and connections amongst the various themes were examined. It was found that some of these themes had commonalities amongst them and could be clustered together. For example, associations to one family's construct of 'Grandmother Too Present' initially emerged as a preliminary theme of

‘Conflict in the Family.’ Later this was clustered with another theme of ‘Connection to Family of Origin,’ and ultimately subsumed under that title. Some themes were sub themes of larger ones, often indicating polar aspects within a theme, thus illuminating the analysis in greater detail. For example, two preliminary themes were, ‘Wanting Traditional Families,’ and ‘Pursuing Individual Needs,’ which were analyzed as being polar opposite sub-themes of another theme, ‘Individual vs. Family Orientation.’ This latter theme was eventually clustered with yet another theme, and took on a different title of ‘Family Values.’

This information on theme clusters was later helpful in identifying the family’s specific connection to a specific theme, which had been formerly introduced in the grid-scale analysis. It was also useful in the discussion of final results in that specific construct-theme examples from a specific family could be extracted from the table of clusters and be used to illustrate various family themes in the overall analysis.

In the analysis of clusters, preliminary themes were analyzed and a reduced list of themes for the first family was produced. This involved a selective process in which the nature of each theme was analyzed, with some relatively obscure themes being discarded and others that were similar in concept, richness, and frequency being kept. The remaining themes were then grouped into distinct units with new comprehensive titles, thus generating the first family’s list of general family themes (see Appendix B, Table B5.11).

These general family themes became the basis of the next stage of the theme analysis, which analyzed themes *across* families. The goal was to determine if there were themes common to all constructs from all families in the study. In this stage of the analysis, as in the first one, IPA procedures were applied. In beginning the analysis of the constructs of the remaining nine families, the first family’s set of general themes were used as a basis to look for more instances of the ones already identified, as well as to look for new ones. For each additional family’s constructs, associations and preliminary themes were identified and placed either into the first set of general themes, or became new ones. Using the IPA procedures explained above, resulting groupings were then reduced to manageable ones and a final list of general themes *across* families was produced. In the final procedure, all general themes across all ten families were analyzed and a master list of major family themes emerged.

After all the families’ shared constructs had been submitted to a theme analysis, a comprehensive list of major family themes and associated issues was compiled (see Appendix B, Table B5.12) and this information was brought back to each family’s grid-scale analysis. Results of each scale were then reviewed in relation to connections and associations of the identified themes. Issues (as noted from transcripts) that individual family members experienced in relation to these themes were also recorded.

For each family, the information from their scale and theme analyses was then developed into a narrative account. This account was produced for all ten families, and the results integrated into a general discussion of the overall theme analysis.

This chapter has outlined the method of research used in the current study, and the following chapter presents results and discussions of the scale and theme analyses.

## CHAPTER VI: RESULTS

In this chapter, results are predominately set out as case studies of ten families. They are presented in two sections: within-family and across-families.

The analytic process is outlined in Figure 6.1, which shows the stages of analysis within- and across-families.

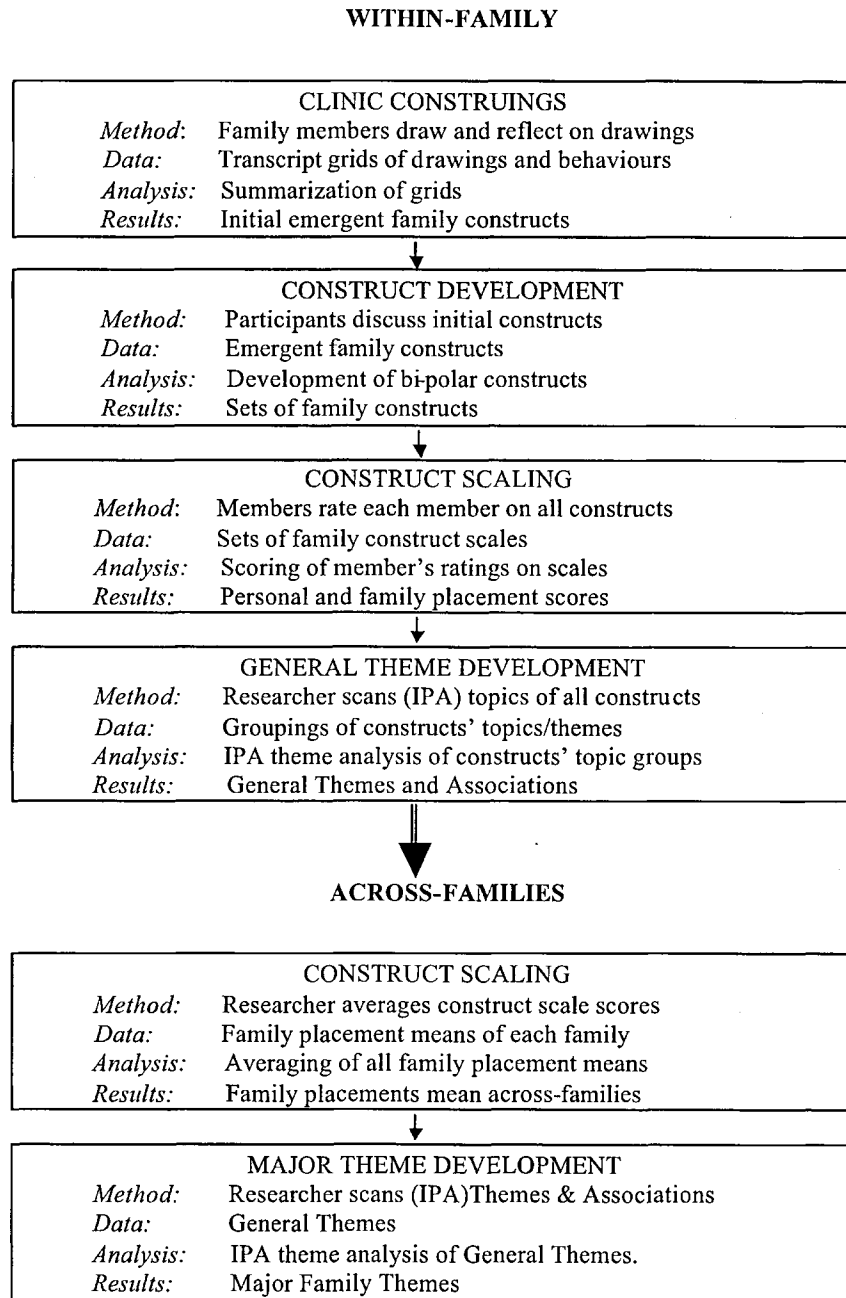


Figure 6.1. Stages of analysis within- and across-families

Each within-family analysis was based on a collation of observations of the family's drawings, reflections and interactive behaviours. Observation transcripts came from notes and videotapes of the initial clinic session. I then summarized and placed information from these transcripts in a family's construing grid. From this grid, I constructed several emergent constructs and presented them to the family for further development of a set of shared family constructs. These completed sets of emergent and submergent constructs were then analyzed to investigate themes.

Smith's (1996) Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used as the basis for the theme analysis. Smith's perspective is that a researcher engages in an interpretative relationship with participants in order to determine meanings inherent in their beliefs or constructs (p. 19). In the present study, this interpretative frame was used in the elicitation of meanings from family members regarding their drawings, behaviours, and feelings about their family. IPA was also used -- although in a different fashion -- in the investigation of themes. In Smith's usual method of theme-development, he uses analysis of scripts, which have many examples of *words* that participants have used to support their beliefs. In the present research, I analyzed drawings and behaviours in order to create emergent constructs, which were then given to the family to develop further into sets of constructs. It was these *shared family constructs* that were subjected to a theme analysis using IPA methods.

The theme analysis has been described in detail in Chapter V. As an overview, the basis of each *within-family* analysis was a list of the family's shared constructs. Using Smith's (1996) IPA methods, I scanned each construct in a family, noting associations as well as general themes emerging from these associations. For the *across-families* analysis, a list of the first family's associations and themes were used as a basis on which to find additional associations and themes across all ten families. The results were then summarized and synthesized into fewer, distinct units with each one bearing a comprehensive title describing the topic/themes within it. These units then became the major themes common across all families in the study. The *within-family* theme analysis illuminated general focus areas of each family as embedded in their family constructs, and the *across-families* analysis helped to determine a major theme consensus, which allowed for a further comparison of the specific results with the general literature on families.

Throughout the present study, I collaborated with my assistants in the collection of data. Taking a constructivist position, the reality of the participant's world was determined by an ongoing process of interpretative interactions amongst us all. This differed from the more usual quantitative, inter-rater method in which individual raters give numerical ratings to a specific set of observed participant behaviours and then assign an overall frequency count to describe the results and obtain inter-rater reliability. Inter-rater reliability involves two aspects: the first is the extent of agreement among observers/raters as to *what* they observe and the second is the extent to which observers/raters agree on *how* they describe their observations (Heynes & Zander, 1953, pp. 410-412). It has been suggested that consistently used systems are considered reliable, and if they are measuring what they are supposed to be measuring, results can be considered accurate/valid: therefore, the higher the reliability, the greater the validity (Cone, 1982, p.69).

In the present research, a different stance was taken to obtain these important criteria. Instead of inter-rater reliability, *inter-rater co-construction* was more often employed, thus allowing a spontaneous, interactive and ongoing method of understanding the content, complexity and *meanings* of the participants' behaviours. Assistants were previously trained in interpretative communications, the focus of the study, and the tasks at hand. We tried to remain aware of our own values and beliefs and wrote post-session memos as to the logistics and

events encountered. We also engaged in post-session debriefings as to the “how” and “what” of the session’s interactions and observations. This was done in order to provide a basis for research reliability and validity, but as Pidgeon states, “we cannot simply hold up a mirror to reality, no matter how well grounded our account” (1996, p. 84).

### **6.1 An Overview of Within-Family Analyses: One Family’s Results**

In order to demonstrate the complete analysis and results process, the within-family section begins by describing one case study in detail. It presents data relating to drawings and associated behaviours of one family’s members, as well as the development of its shared family constructs. It also explains the results of this family’s construct scale analysis and theme analysis, which were based on the family’s shared family constructs. Results of this first family’s theme analysis are then shown to be the basis of the later across-families theme analysis, in which themes of the remaining nine families are integrated into major family themes. After the first case study is presented and analyzed, similar results from the other case studies are shown.

A large number of drawings were completed in the study, but due to space limitations in the text, only a few are presented. Specific words and actions of participants are also not always presented in the text, but may be described generally. However, these descriptions are based on actual comments, drawings and other behaviours as noted in transcribed and videotaped observations.

In the following case studies, pseudonyms are used for family names in order to prevent identification.

#### **6.1.1 Thompson Family**

This family consists of a divorced 33 year old father, Robert, and his 9 year old daughter, Nancy. The father and his divorced wife co-parent their daughter, who lives one half of the week with each parent. The parents are both university graduate students who came to Canada as a married couple to begin their graduate studies together. They separated and divorced soon after arrival and now live in separate family housing units, which are located at opposite ends of the campus.

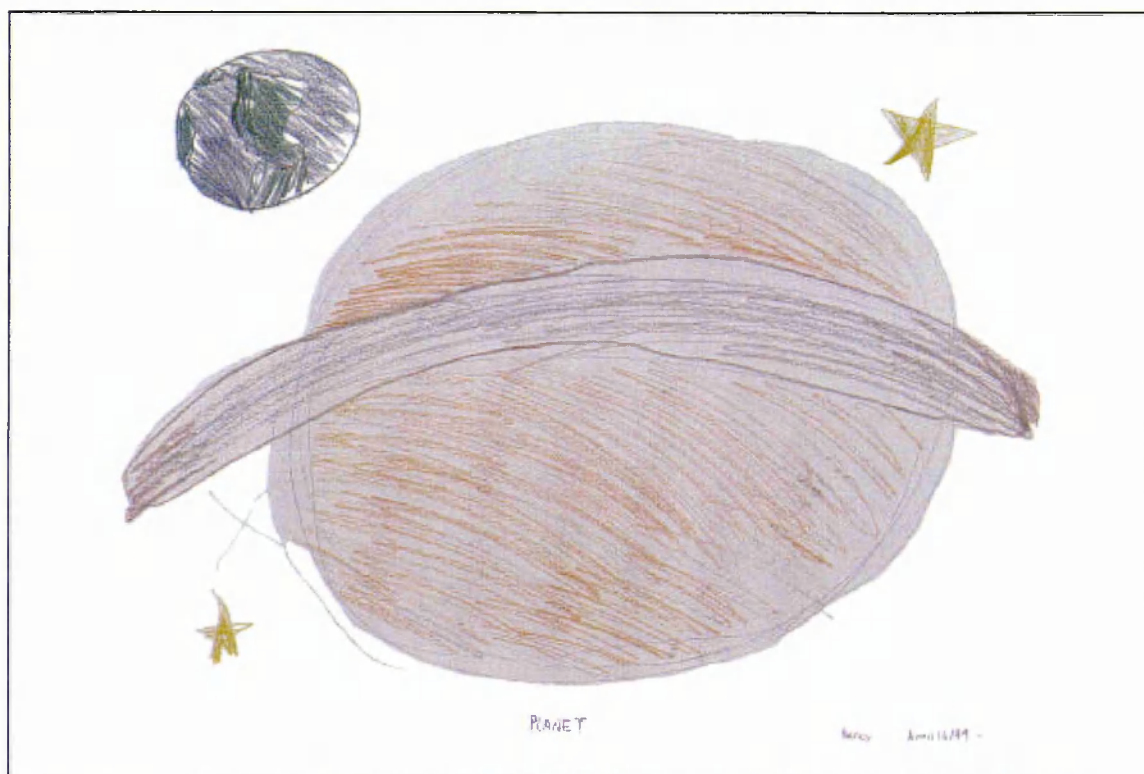
The father also has a younger daughter, Sally, who lives with her mother in another country. Sally’s mother is not Nancy’s mother, who lives on campus. Nancy’s mother decided not to be a research participant, as she felt that it would be a good opportunity for the father and daughter to have an activity together. However, Nancy’s mother remained interested throughout the research. At the close of our sessions, we all met together and discussed what had been done. The father and daughter proudly displayed their family drawings, explaining them and their developed constructs to the mother. At the end we had a celebration cake to honour them, and the family members made a wish for their family before blowing out the candles.

#### ***Thompson Family Scribble Drawings***

Individual scribbles completed by the Thompson family are shown below. The first drawing was by the daughter, Nancy, and the second by the father, Robert. The third drawing is a jointly developed elaboration of the father’s initial scribble. The father and daughter chose the father’s scribble as the one they would use as the base for their joint picture.

The daughter’s colourful scribble was that of the earth and a planet, shown in Figure 6.2. She titled her picture, “Planet,” and reflected that she was off in the distance somewhere, just an unimportant speck in time and space. Note that there is no image of her in the picture.





*Figure 6.2.* Thompson family: Initial 'scribble' by Nancy entitled "Planet"

The father drew a scribble and titled it, "The Actor," shown in Figure 6.3. He talked about how he liked the theatre and would often go to watch his actor friend, who gave interactive performances. The father elaborated on how complex and difficult it is to be an actor, how they have to play many roles, even if they do not fully understand them. Note that there is no expression or colour on the actor's face. It is devoid of feeling.

The daughter asked the father to have them both develop his picture. They did this, with the daughter sitting on his lap the entire time, adding a facial expression, as well as many figures, colours and details to her father's initial scribble. Throughout this joint drawing venture, the father would stroke his daughter's hair as he reflected upon the actor in the picture, explaining how he could relate to him. The father's explanation evolved into that of him becoming aware that he too, was an actor in life, playing many difficult roles that he did not fully understand. He said he was surprised at these new thoughts. The 'actor' theme became a central one throughout our later sessions, with the daughter reminding her father that they had to "get their act together." The meanings that emerged from these drawings later became the basis of several of the family's shared constructs. Note how the jointly developed picture in Figure 6.4 appears more human than the initial scribble. The joint drawing also has vibrancy. The father and daughter decided upon the title, "Acting Colors," because the actor was now doing something, and appeared colourful. It was the daughter who added these qualities to the picture.

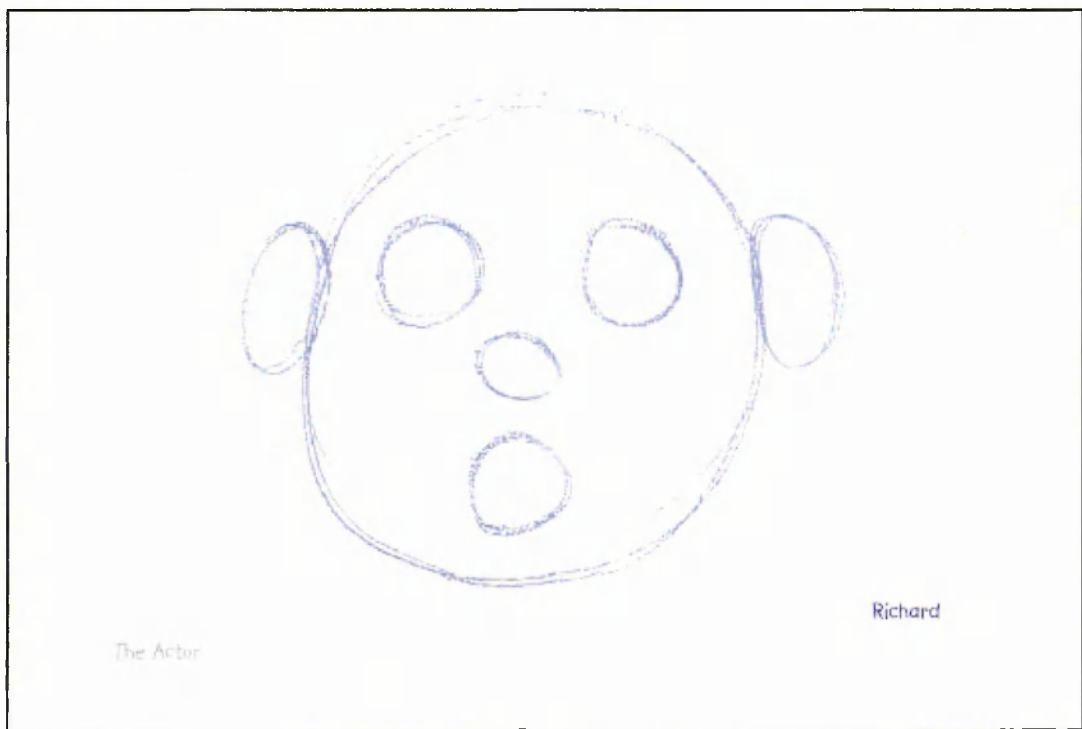


Figure 6.3. Thompson family: Initial 'scribble' by Father entitled "The Actor"

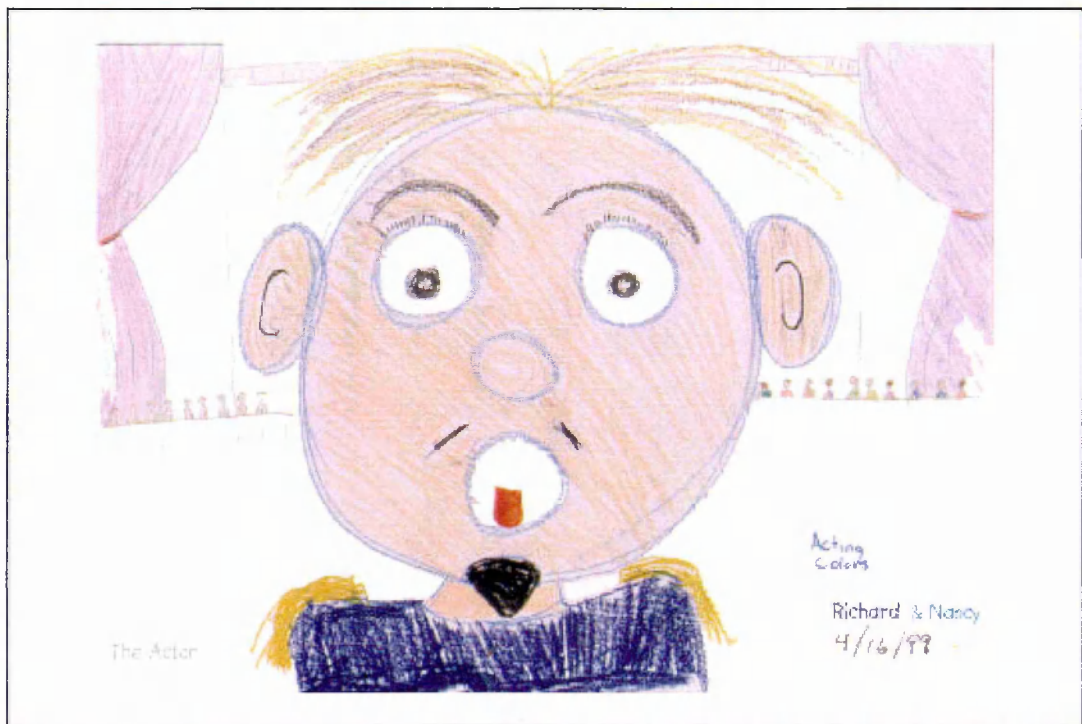


Figure 6.4. Thompson family: Joint 'scribble' by Father and Nancy entitled "Acting Colors"

### Thompson Family Drawings

The father and daughter also individually drew representations of their family. The father drew a picture of his biological family and titled it, "My Father's Shade," as shown in Figure 6.5. Relating to his picture, he

reflected upon the sadness and alienation in his family of origin, and on how his father blocked out the sunshine. The father also included drawings of his two daughters with the sun shining only on them. He reflected upon how he did not want to be like his own father, and how the future had to be better than the past. This reflection later became incorporated into a family construct. In the drawing, note that the figure 'me' is drawn the darkest, and that there is only one smiling face – Nancy's.

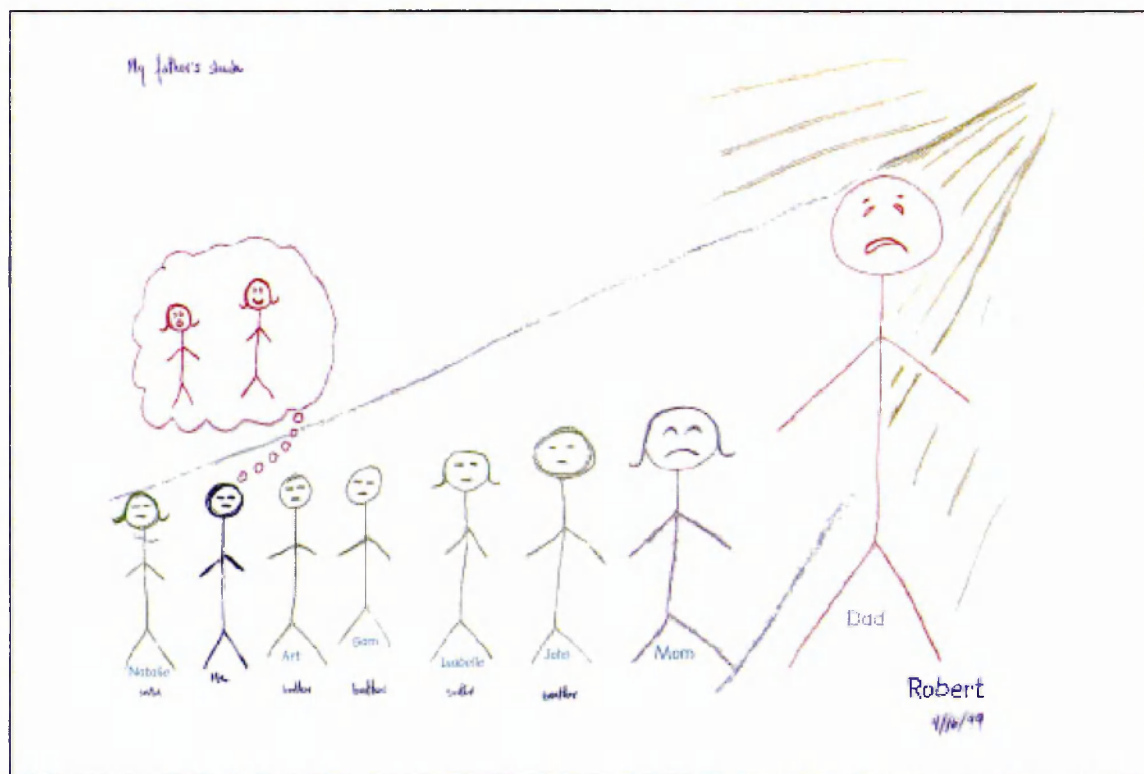


Figure 6.5. Thompson family: Family drawing by Father entitled “My Father’s Shade”

The daughter drew a picture of her current family, shown in Figure 6.6, and titled it, “My Family.” She drew a soccer game, with her divorced parents playing as rivals on opposing teams. Nancy is on her father’s team and her half-sister, Sally, is on Nancy’s mother’s team. This mother has never met Sally. Note that Nancy is shooting the ball at her half-sister and the goal. Also note that behind the net is a black bird near the family picnic basket. Nancy reflected that while the teams are busy scoring against one another, the bird might eat all the food and destroy the real reason for them getting together -- a family picnic.

#### **Thompson Family Construct Development**

In Table B5.1 (see Appendix B), information related to the drawings and associated behaviours of the Thompson family are portrayed in a Perceiver Element Grid (PEG). This grid shows my analysis of the Thompson’s initial, clinic session. This was the precursor of the family’s emergent constructs. The information in this table came from drawings, videotapes and observational notes of the Thompson family during the clinic session, and the method of analysis was an adaptation of the IPA developed by Smith, Jarman & Osborne (1996). Using this method, associations are made from participant’s transcripts to produce related topics/themes. Transcripts are read and reviewed closely in order to find inherent meanings, which the researcher then interprets

in order to create some order from the concepts and ideas that have been extracted from the participant's responses (p. 223). From these interpretations, emerging associations/themes are then assembled and given descriptive titles, which in this study were the family's initial emergent constructs. There is thus a close, interactive, interpretative connection between the data, researcher and participants, with the participants interacting with me in my later presentation of the IPA grid analysis as they re-shaped the initial constructs.



Figure 6.6. Thompson family: Family drawing by Nancy entitled "My Family"

In the grid, results show how the father sees himself, his daughter and his family, as well as how the daughter sees herself, her father, and her family. It is noteworthy that in the "Family" column there is no inclusion by the father of either of his daughters' mothers. Of equal importance is that the father has identified his family as being that of his sad, biological family – in which he is in his father's shade -- accompanied by his two daughters, who are in the sun. However, he views the future for his daughters as better: as them having a life in the sun, because of the opportunities he will provide for them. The father's perspective of his family therefore appears to focus on both the past and the future.

The daughter's view of her family is more focussed on the present. She has identified it as having current conflicts, uncertainties, and mixed emotions. She has also included her half-sister and her mother as active family members.

An overview of both the father's and daughter's presentation of their family shows different time perspectives in which the current family is viewed. Only the daughter focuses on the present context. Both father and daughter care about each other and desire a better future, but it is only in the daughter's representation of the family that her mother is included.



After completion of the clinic grid and the further analysis and synthesis of its information as shown in Table B5.2 (see Appendix B), four emergent shared family constructs were developed. These constructs represented meanings subscribed to the family by its members and were titled: Future Oriented; Inclusive; Happy; and Changing. They were then presented to the family in order for them to evaluate or change them, or to add another construct, as shown in Table B5.3 (see Appendix B). The family was also asked to determine appropriate related submergent poles for each of the emergent ones. When the family later finalized their sets of constructs, they became part of a scale analysis in which the family members rated their perceptions of each of the construct sets. Table B5.4 shows the Legend, which explains the elements of the grid scales.

#### ***Thompson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

Tables B5.5-B5.9 display the Thompson family's final set of shared family constructs portrayed within grids (see Appendix B).

These grids are presented in the construct's hierarchical order of importance, which the family determined. Therefore, the first construct is the most important, with the others ranking lower. Also presented are the results of the scale analysis of each one of the constructs. Using Procter's (1996) Perceiver-Element Grid (PEG), each member was asked, on a scale of 1-4, where they would place themselves on a construct, as well as where they felt the other family members would place themselves on each of the constructs. The results show the family's overall placement of itself and each member on each construct, as well as each individual's placement of the family on that construct.

Below are the shared family constructs that the Thompson family developed, and a discussion of the key results of the scale analysis relating to these constructs. Explanations of scaling terms are:

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Each family member's view of how they think the collective family sees itself on the particular construct

##### *Family's Placement of Family:*

The collective family's view of where it sees itself on the particular construct

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

The collective family's view of where it thinks each individual sees her/himself on the particular construct

##### *Scoring:*

Emergent construct pole (1)

Submergent construct pole (4)

#### ***Thompson Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Wanting and Needing to Change, Motivated to be Unlike Father's Biological Family

Submergent (4): Indolent, Lazy, and Afraid of New Changes

##### *Placements on Scale*

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Dad	1.50
Nancy	1.50

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.50

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Dad	1.00
Nancy	2.00

In this construct, the scales reveal how the father and Nancy both strongly want their family to change. This is particularly true for the father, who is scored at the top of the emergent pole (1.00) in the Family's Placement score, as well as in his personal score. Both he and his daughter agree that he is very motivated to be different from his own father, and that he, Robert, does not exhibit the behaviours that were identified as the submergent pole of the construct. The family's collective score is 1.50, solidly on the emergent side of the construct.

Nancy is placed in a more conservative position on the Family Placement score (2.00), closer to the centre of the emergent and submergent constructs. She is evidently not faced with the same intense need or desire for her family to change and shows some resistance and fear about change. This was exhibited in her comments and drawings about her family, where she placed her mother and father, as well as her half-sister, all playing soccer together. Nancy has had some difficulty adjusting to her parent's divorce, but also appears to have benefited from their support in that she has the desire to accept the changes in her life and move on. This is reflected in her position on this construct, where she does not identify herself with the submergent side of this scale.

### ***Thompson Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Future Oriented – It's the Only Way Out  
 Submergent (4): Motionless, Repeating Mistakes from the Past

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Dad	1.00
Nancy	1.50

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 1.25

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Dad	1.50
Nancy	1.00

The scale shows a strong family consensus (1.25) that this family is future oriented. Both the father and Nancy agree that they see the future with hope for change, with Nancy placing the family on the extreme emergent side of this construct (1.00).

Nancy personally scores her father closer to the middle (2.00) on this construct, which indicates that she still does not see his view of the family as entirely future oriented or entirely unlikely to repeat mistakes from the past. This indicates that she believes he is still acting towards the submergent pole of this construct. It is also noteworthy that they disagree slightly on this score. The father feels that he is absolutely on the emergent side (1.00) of this construct and scores himself at the top of the emergent pole, indicating that he is sure that his family will not be repeating his past.

### ***Thompson Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Inclusive, Connected to Extended Family, Including Sally  
Submergent (4): It Wouldn't be a Family, No Sense of Belonging

Placements on Scale

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Dad	1.00
Nancy	1.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.00

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Dad	1.00
Nancy	1.00

In this analysis, both the father and Nancy agree that they are an inclusive family and that Sally is a part of their family definition (1.00). This is noteworthy, as she is mentioned primarily by Nancy in her drawing, and is accepted as being a part of their lives via visits and telephone conversations. Both the father and Nancy are evidently in agreement about their understanding of this relationship and the parameters around their family.

This family also views their extended family as a cultural "grounding." They describe visits to big family parties back home as events that keep them connected to their country of origin and their culture in general. The value of their cultural heritage is evident in an ethnic name of Nancy's and the father's intention to return to his home country when he has completed his education.

Also important is the role of the mother in this family. While she chose not to participate in the activities associated with data collection, she was very interested in hearing how the process was going and attended the final meeting in order to gain an understanding of what had transpired. She was consistently a part of the conversations, and a presence in Nancy's art.

***Thompson Family Construct #4***

Emergent(1): Father is Caring and Considerate  
Submergent (4): Not Connected to Each Other

Placements on Scale

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Dad	2.00
Nancy	1.50

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.75

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Father	2.00
Nancy	1.50

This construct was created by the family as an addition to those developed from the initial analysis of the clinic construing grid. In this construct, Robert's role as the father and head of the family bears significant influence on the family member's connections to one another. If, as seen in the emergent pole, he is caring and considerate, then the family has a sense of connection. However, if that is lacking, as indicated in the submergent

pole, then the family does not have a sense of connection to one another. The family places their collective score on the emergent side (1.75), choosing the more positive view.

Both the father and Nancy have personally identified the father as viewing this construct just on the side of the emergent pole (2.00), which indicates that they see this important aspect of their family as leaning towards caring and considerate. However, there is also a level of disconnection implied. This is substantiated by the father's acknowledgement of the work he is doing to try to recognize the effects of his actions on Nancy and her mother. This also addresses his recognition of the influence of his own father, whom he describes as being very uncaring and inconsiderate.

#### ***Thompson Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Happy, Focussed on Making the Best of Life  
Submergent (4) Unsatisfied, Weak, Fighting, Sad

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Dad	2.00
Nancy	2.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.00

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Dad	2.00
Nancy	2.00

In all of this family's constructs, this is the one that places them furthest from the emergent pole. However, the family's placement is still on the emergent side of viewing their family as being happy and focussed on making the best of life (2.00). There is absolute congruence in how the father and daughter position themselves and the family on this construct. The results indicate that each person aims for the positives in their family.

Some of Nancy's drawings indicate the energy attached to the submergent side of this construct. Figure B6.1 (see Appendix B) shows a drawing Nancy did of her father while he was chastising her for not giving him the same consideration he felt she gave to her mother. Figure B6.2 (see Appendix B) is a coupon Nancy drew and gave to her father after he had said that she had given her mother permission to have more children, but not similarly to him.

It is interesting that this family often talks about the dual nature of dissatisfaction in their lives. Despite their desire to be happy, they express that dissatisfaction serves a purpose in that it prevents them from being stagnant.

#### ***Thompson Family Scale Analysis Summary***

Results of the scale analysis of the Thompson's family placements across all of their shared family constructs showed that their mean response placed them securely on the emergent side (1.50). These are the constructs currently employed by them. This indicates that they basically view their family as happy; as looking towards the future, as wanting and needing change, while maintaining a strong connection to their family of origin.



### 6.1.2 Across-Families Analysis

Results from the Thompson family's initial analysis were placed in an across-families analysis. Specifically, the Thompson's shared family constructs were subjected to an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) in accordance with theme analysis procedures used by Smith, Jarman & Osborne (1996). Details of the IPA are described later in this chapter, and results of the various stages of the Thompson's theme analysis are presented in Tables B5.10-B5.12 (see Appendix B). Initial themes that emerged from this family's IPA were: Connection to Family of Origin, Concerns of Present Family, Prospect of Change, and The Future.

These four general themes became the basis for the IPA of the remaining families, and the results of this across-families analysis revealed the emergence of five major family themes: Family of Origin, Family Values, Family Structure, Family's Everyday Concerns, and Management of Change. These are discussed in Section 6.3, and the percentages of the major family themes associated with shared family constructs within the Thompson family are shown in Figure 6.7.

Note that the most represented theme in the Thompson family is that of Family's Management of Change. This is directly related to their constructs, which deal with the desire to not repeat the father's past. It also refers to the fact that the family is experiencing the effects of a recent divorce, as well as those of living in a foreign country. Also, there is an uncertainty of where the family members will live, once the parents have graduated. Nancy wonders with whom she will be staying. The Family of Origin theme is also a central one in this family, and is related to the first theme, as well as to the feeling of closeness that each one has for their extended family.

This closeness was articulated in the third family construct that specifically referred to the notion that they would not be a family if they were not inclusive of one another. Family's Everyday Concerns is related to daily stresses such as housing, finances, schooling, socializing, emotions, and goal achievements. This is a family whose constructs and themes are oriented around its family of origin and change.

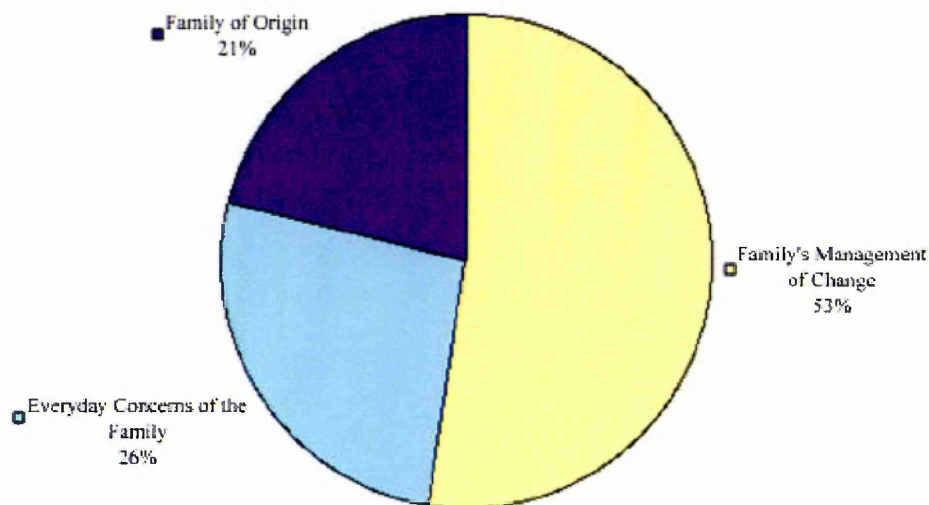


Figure 6.7. Percentages of major family themes in Thompson family

## **6.2 Within-Families Analyses: Results of Nine Families**

Following is a presentation of the results of the remaining nine families in this research. Because of space limitations, only a few, representative drawings will be included within the text.

### **6.2.1 Robertson Family**

This nuclear family consists of the following members: the father, Rick, aged 48, the mother, Linda, aged 45, and the sons, Norton, aged 12, and Troy, aged 7. Both parents have worked fulltime during their marriage, but the mother is currently unemployed, as she feels this is an important time in her children's development, and that she should be at home and available for them. The father's job allows him to work fulltime from his office at home. The oldest son appears fairly calm and content, while the youngest son talks and moves quickly, and is more the centre of attention within the family. The family is home-oriented, with a focus on the children.

#### ***Robertson Family Scribble Drawings***

Each member of the family did a scribble drawing. The mother named hers, "Smiling Face" and the father titled his, "NBA," which is the acronym for the National Basketball Association; the premier basketball league in North America. The mother's drawing was in a light orange colour and the father's was in bold black. The youngest son's scribble was dark, with overlapping lines, and included an ant in the middle. He was aware that he was slowing up the session's process by taking a long time to choose his colours. His brother showed frustration at this. The youngest son did not title his picture. The oldest son's scribble consisted of a few big, red circles. He titled his drawing, "Face."

The mother asked the family to choose the oldest son's scribble as their picture to refinish as a joint project. The youngest son tried to dominate the process by wanting a penis on the drawing, but the parents intervened. He then added a devil's fork to the picture. The mother appeared to shift the drawing towards that of a face (her individual scribble had been that of a smiling face), and put eyeglasses on it. Both the mother and the oldest son wear eyeglasses. The youngest son wanted the picture named after him, but the mother asked the family to title their joint drawing, "The Robertson Boys." Each signed their first name on it.

#### ***Robertson Family Drawings***

Each family member drew a different representation of the family. The father's drawing was titled, "Family Dinner Outside," and it depicted a family barbecue, with all of the family members present. The oldest son pencilled a picture of the family home, with all of the family members close together on the doorstep. He titled his picture, "Home Environment." The youngest son drew a picture of a horizontal rope, on which all of the members of the family are hanging. Everyone is smiling, of equal size and drawn in bright colours.

The mother's picture is titled, "The Robertson Family" and is shown in Figure 6.8. Note that all of the members are portrayed as being fairly equal in size, with mother being drawn in the brightest colour. Each member is identified by his or her own name: something that forms the basis of a later family construct that dealt with individual vs. role identities in the family. The figures are close, and the paper is filled with references to activities that the family values: for example, love and play. Parental duties suggest access and affection. The picture is a neat and organized image of a family.

### ***Robertson Family Construct Development***

A summary analysis of the Robertson's first clinic session in which the family members drew scribbles as well as representations of their family, showed that most family members represent the family as being fairly traditional: loving, connected, home-oriented, active, stable and secure. There are also references to individual vs. role identities, and the youngest son indicates some anxieties within the family unit. This analysis resulted in the following emergent constructs being presented to the Robertson's for the development of their shared family constructs: Self Identification, Home Orientation, Security, Connected, Ownership, Active, and Traditional.

### ***Robertson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The following shows the Robertson's developed shared family constructs, as well as a discussion of the key results of the scale analysis on these constructs. For brevity, personal scores are not listed, and explanations of scaling terms can be found on p. 124.

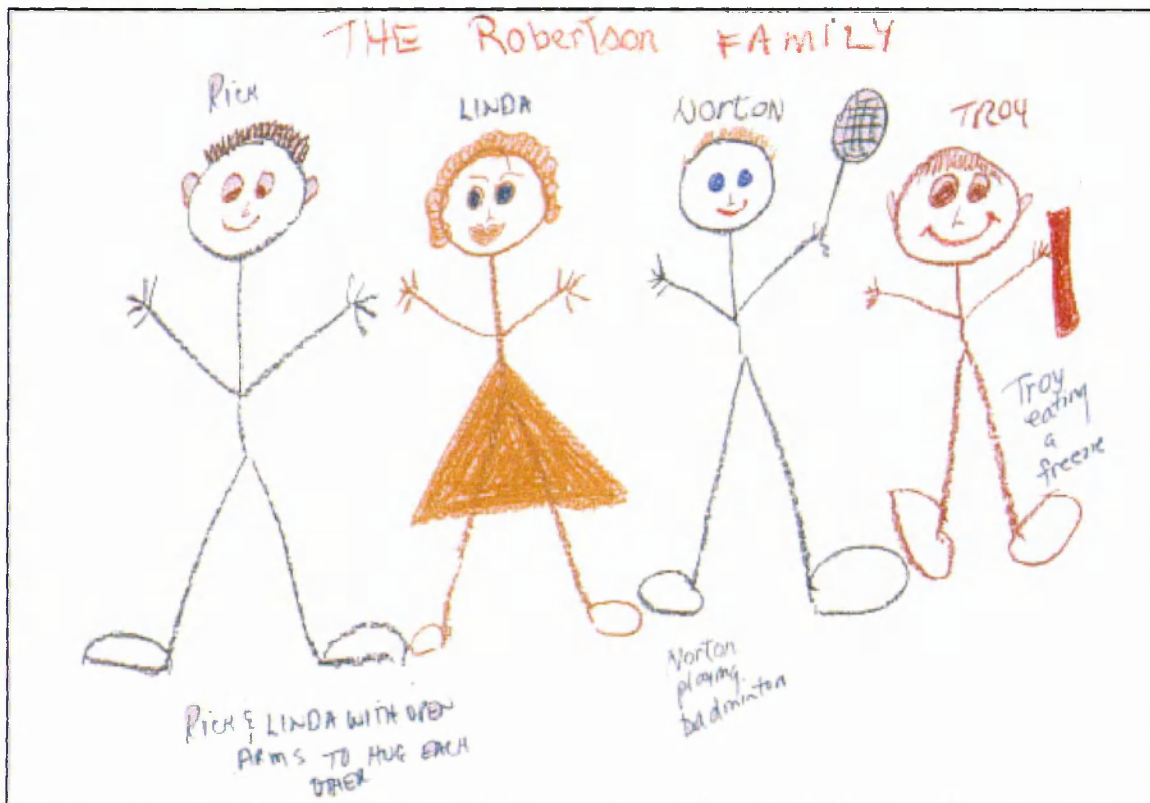


Figure 6.8. Robertson family: Family drawing by Mother entitled "The Robertson Family"

### ***Robertson Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Connected  
Submergent(4): Unavailable

### ***Placements on Scale***

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00

Troy	1.00
<i>Family's Placement of Family:</i>	1.00
<i>Family's Placement of Individuals:</i>	
Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

In this construct, the family appears unilaterally motivated to be seen as being together (1.00). They express that they all see the family as entirely and unfalteringly connected. The intensity of this family's focus on the emergent side of the construct must say something about family member's values and individualities: there is no challenge to the value of connection. This was also reflected in the mother's family drawing on which she printed, "with open arms to hug each other" (see Figure 6.8).

### ***Robertson Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Proud Ownership  
Submergent (4): Uninvolved

#### *Placements on Scale*

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.50
Troy	1.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.12

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.50

Here again, the family stresses the positive and emergent side of the construct to the exclusion of differences of opinion (1.12). However, of note is Norton's personal expression that he sees his younger brother as uninvolved (3.00). This may reflect a "big brother" view, in that Norton may see his younger brother as being too childish and self-focussed. At the time of this research, the mother had just left her job, after deciding that it took her too far away from her family. The family was well aware of its importance.

### ***Robertson Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Active  
Submergent (4): Passive

#### *Placements on Scale*

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.50
-----	------

Dad	1.50
Norton	1.75
Troy	2.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.68

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	2.00
Norton	2.75
Troy	1.00

This analysis shows a slight variety in the responses about their family's activity level. There is a full consensus on the parent's individual and family placements: all are on the active side. Norton's perspective of the family seems to be viewed differently by other members of the family. In fact, he is given a family placement score of 2.75, which is on the submergent side of the construct. Norton is generally viewed as being more quiet and settled. The collective family score indicates that they situate themselves generally on the emergent side (1.68) and see themselves as a fairly active family, with the mother and Troy being the two family members who are portrayed as the most active. The father and Norton are viewed as being more studious and less outgoing than either the mother or Troy.

#### ***Robertson Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Traditional Family

Submergent (4): Dysfunctional

#### **Placements on Scale**

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.00

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

This family liked the idea of seeing themselves as traditional. Their view is interesting in that if the family is not traditional, then it is dysfunctional. They were clear that the submergent side of this construct would be dysfunctional, but did not acknowledge any shred of dysfunction within their family. In this analysis, there is absolute consensus that they are a traditional family (1.00).

#### ***Robertson Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Perfect Balance

Submergent (4): Chaotic

### Placements on Scale

#### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.50
Norton	1.50
Troy	2.25

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.56

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.75
Norton	1.75
Troy	1.75

This construct illustrates the family's sense of balance and control. They have applied adjectives such as 'perfect' and 'happy' to the emergent side of the constructs, and have made the construct poles to be "good and bad" in their meanings.

In this construct, we see that the father and Norton are both seen to view the family on the emergent side (1.75) but not absolutely balanced. The entire family agrees that the mother is, and sees the family as, perfectly balanced (1.00). She places her family at the top of the emergent side, indicating that she sees all of the individuals, as well as the family, as perfectly balanced.

It is interesting that the family views Troy, the youngest son, as believing that the family is balanced (1.75), while he scores his view at the top of the submergent pole (4.00). This suggests that he has a perception that is in conflict with how the others see things. Troy has introduced here the first strongly submergent score of chaos and has rebelled against the intensity of the "good" description of the family that has been indicated up to this point.

### ***Robertson Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): Happy Family  
Submergent (4): Not Nice

### Placements on Scale

#### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	2.25

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.31

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.25
Dad	1.25
Norton	1.25
Troy	1.50

This analysis reveals that the overall family total is on the emergent side (1.31), which indicates that they see themselves as a happy family. However, Troy is once again the person who applies scores that break

with the tradition of viewing the family in an extremely positive way. His personal score of the family is 3.00. He challenges the family to acknowledge that they are not a completely and absolutely happy family, and that they can sometimes not be nice. However, his individual placement by the family is only slightly on the submergent side (2.25), and his family's collective placement of him is on the emergent side (1.50), which indicates that he still sees the family as being mostly on the happy side of the construct.

***Robertson Family Construct #7***

Emergent (1): Provided for  
Submergent (4): Poor

*Placements on Scale*

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.50
Dad	1.50
Norton	1.50
Troy	2.25

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.56

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	2.75
Troy	2.00

In this construct, the family's total indicates that they see themselves as provided for (1.56). However, the children have both moved towards the submergent pole. Norton has scored on the submergent side of the construct with regards to his family's placement of him on the scale (2.75). The mother and the father are adamant and clear that they feel the family is provided for. They are also viewed that way. The children perceive the family as more towards poor. This may be related to the fact that the mother has quit her job, and that the children may be speculating that things may change in their family because of this. It may also have to do with the parent's position that the children cannot have everything that they desire.

***Robertson Family Construct #8***

Emergent (1): Self Identity  
Submergent (4): Role Identity

*Placements on Scale*

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.75
Dad	1.25
Norton	1.50
Troy	1.25

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.43

*Family's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.75
-----	------

Dad	2.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

In this construct, the family sees itself on the emergent side of having self identities (1.43). The construct is not as value-laden as some others in that it does not contain adjectives that denote an evaluative quality, such as "poor."

As indicated here, the mother and father are viewed in the family as seeing themselves as having self identities, but as acknowledging to some extent their role identities. In personal allocations, the mother strongly scores the father towards role identity (3.00), where he conversely scores her strongly towards self-identity (1.00). The mother's family drawing had shown this, where she identified herself and the others by their names. This raises a point made in conversation regarding the mother and father's relationship, in that they identified themselves as being very much a couple and attracted to one another individually. They were together for years before they had their children, and the father describes the mother as career oriented. The father's role identity may be accentuated right now due to his current position as the sole provider in the family; also because he is working from the home, where the family has a constant view of him as the provider.

#### ***Robertson Family Construct #9***

Emergent (1): Home Oriented  
Submergent (4): Unconnected to Home

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.00

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

The family is definitely identified as home oriented (1.00). According to them, their lives are completely organized around their home life. The father is working from the home, the mother takes great pride in the home, and the children are both entirely centred on their home. The father's family drawing also indicated the family's orientation toward their home. Further, the home reflects this: it is spotless, tastefully decorated and well maintained.

#### ***Robertson Family Construct #10***

Emergent (1): Security  
Submergent (4): Unsafe



### Placements on Scale

#### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.00

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Norton	1.00
Troy	1.00

This analysis shows that the family is absolutely situated on the side of security (1.00). They are focussed on indicating that their lives are safe, secure, home oriented, and that without fail -- they are emotionally connected and proud of their family. Their sense of security is evident in many areas.

#### ***Robertson Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The results showed that the mean response on the family placement score across all of the Robertson's shared family constructs was clearly on the emergent side (1.27). This suggests that the family views themselves as proudly connected, perfectly balanced, happy, home-oriented and traditional -- with a strong emphasis on individual identities within their unit.

#### ***6.2.2 The Gibson Family***

There are two parents and three children in this nuclear family. The father, Gordon, is 41 years of age, the mother, Marlene is 35, the oldest daughter Rachel is 14, her sister, Hanna is 11, and the only son, Matt is 10. This family is on a one-year teaching sabbatical from their native Middle Eastern country, and the mother and daughters wear a mixture of their traditional clothing and western attire. They live in university housing, and the children attend nearby schools. The father pursues his research studies, and the mother is a homemaker. A few months after their arrival in Canada, the family moved to another part of the country to better accommodate the father's research activities.

In their native country, the father and the mother are both in the teaching profession. They joined our research project because of their interest in the development of their family, as well as the mother's desire to learn more about their children.

#### ***Gibson Family Scribble Drawings***

Each family member produced circles in their scribble drawings. The father titled his drawing, "Circle" and the son titled his, "Boy is Hero." This theme of Hero became a familiar one in the family. Rachel drew a very perfect and controlled circle and titled her picture, "The World." Rachel is the acknowledged artist in the family. Her sister, Hanna, lightly drew a large circle, which she titled, "Honey." Hanna is apparently known in the family as being sweet. Her mother also drew a large circle, and named it, "Happy Face." She says it has always been her trademark.

The family chose the mother's scribble as the one to jointly develop. At the start, the son wanted his picture to be chosen. While the father stroked the son's hair, the other family members decided on the mother's scribble. The result of their joint drawing effort was a smiling face, developed with specific features. The son

then proceeded to put “M” (the first initial of his name) all over the picture -- on the face’s eyes, ears, nose – everywhere. Matt definitely left his mark on the family. He then wanted the picture named after him. His mother disagreed, and decided on the title, “Happy Family.” When instructions were given for the drawing to be signed, Matt wanted only his name on it. It was finally agreed by all family members that each would sign their own names on it.

### ***Gibson Family Drawings***

As a representation of his family, the father drew a blue car on a highway, with mountains in the background and lines in the foreground. There were no people in the picture, and no other details. The father explained that he was driving the car and that it was a symbol of containment and transport of a unit. As shown in Figure D6.1 (see Appendix D), he titled his drawing, “Being Together.” The mother’s family drawing depicted stick figures representing her current family; all were identified by their initials, and all faces had smiles on them. The mother titled her drawing, “Gibson’s family: Year 2000.”

The oldest daughter, Rachel, used the full page to draw bold, colourful images to represent her family. In Figure 6.9, the father is depicted as a non-smiling computer/television screen, the mother as a smiley face, Hanna as a honey pot, Matt as a soccer ball, and Rachel as an artist’s brush. Note how Rachel’s image is in the foreground, over Matt’s ball. She titled her drawing, “Family Characters.”

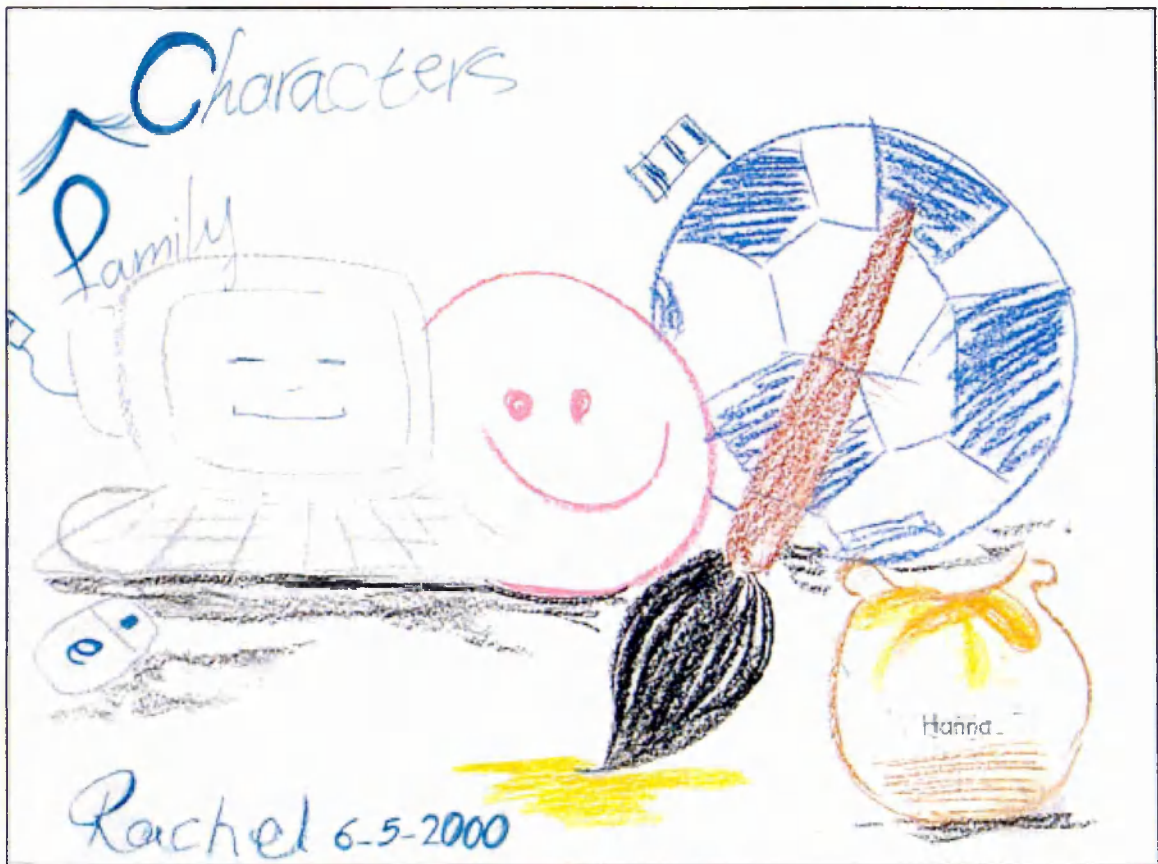


Figure 6.9. Gibson family: Family drawing by Rachel entitled “Family Characters”

Hanna drew a large, colourful fruit tree to represent her family. Five, red apples on the tree represented the family members. Rocks were under the branches, the trunk had a hole in it, and leaves were falling. Hanna titled her picture, "Fruits."

In Figure D6.2 (see Appendix D), Matt's drawing shows a very balanced X drawn across the paper. In each corner he placed an initial to represent each family member, and beside each initial he placed a symbol. The mother's was a smiley face, Hanna's a heart and smiley face, Rachel's an artist's brush, and Matt's a soccer ball. The father was placed in the middle, along with a second representation of Matt. Matt titled his drawing, "Family of Heros."

### ***Gibson Family Construct Development***

An analysis of the drawings and related behaviours revealed the various ways each of the Gibson's viewed their family. In summary, the father saw the family as a unit in transit, and based back home. The mother saw it as happy, needing help, guided by her and her husband, and situated here. The children saw it as heroic, a group of individuals with separate interests and some fears, and as needing excitement. The initial, emergent constructs that were developed from this analysis were: Egalitarian Leadership, Culturally Proud, Together, Not in Familiar Context and Struggling with Change, Uncertain and Needing Definition, and Aware of Each Other's Likes and Interests.

### ***Gibson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The following displays the Gibson's set of shared family constructs that the family developed together. It also presents a discussion of the results of the scale analysis related to these constructs. Personal scores are not listed, and explanations of scaling terms were presented on p. 124.

### ***Gibson Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Together, Isolated from Extended Family  
Submergent (4): Disrespectful of Each Other

### ***Placements on Scale***

#### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.80
Dad	1.60
Matt	1.60
Hanna	1.00
Rachel	1.60

#### ***Family's Placement of Family:***

1.52

#### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.20
Dad	1.40
Matt	1.80
Hanna	1.60
Rachel	1.60

In this construct, the family ascribes meaning to their situation with regards to the geographical distance from their extended family. They also describe the effects of that distance on their sense of togetherness and respect for one another. The family indicates that they feel strongly towards a sense of themselves as together yet

isolated from their extended family (1.52). They all view their family on the side of the emergent pole, with the mother scoring the most strongly on the family's placement of her (1.20). Interestingly, her family members personally scored her view higher towards this pole than did she.

In this family, cultural influences are profound. Respect is important, as is humbleness. This could have implications for the parents in this family, who may not score themselves with absolute scores on the side of a construct that they see as having positive/negative characteristics. As well, the children may also score their parents in a manner that reflects respect for them. This may be one reason for the strong scores towards the emergent pole.

The son, Matt, has the highest individual score (1.80), which is close to the halfway mark. This indicates that his family believes that Matt views them as being marginally more towards disrespectful. The parents in this family express concern about wanting their children to remain connected to their family unit and values, and they stress respectful communication between family members.

### ***Gibson Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Culturally Proud

Submergent (4): Disappointed at Lack of Practice of Their Religion

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.20
Dad	1.40
Matt	1.00
Hanna	1.20
Rachel	1.20

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 1.20

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.20
Matt	1.80
Hanna	1.00
Rachel	1.00

The family scores themselves strongly on the emergent side of this construct (1.20). They are very proud of their culture. All of the females in the family have the highest scores, with the father personally scoring himself slightly lower (2.00). He pointed out that this had to do with being humble. Everyone else believes that the father views the family as extremely culturally proud.

The family sees Matt as being close to halfway on this construct (1.80). However, he sees himself on the extreme end of the emergent pole (1.00). This suggests that the family is somewhat more concerned about Matt's view of the family and his sense of cultural pride than he is.

### ***Gibson Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Not in Familiar Context, Changes Happening Quickly

Submergent (4): Conservative with Change, Adjusting in Time

Placements on Scale

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.40
Dad	1.70
Matt	1.20
Hanna	1.00
Rachel	1.60

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.40

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.40
Dad	1.70
Matt	1.00
Hanna	1.40
Rachel	1.40

This construct indicates the family's concerns regarding being in a transient situation. Members portray themselves more on the emergent side (1.38), in an unfamiliar context with changes happening quickly. The family sees Matt more in the unfamiliar context, and more amenable to change -- perhaps because he is the family member who is most integrated into the local community with school, sports, and friends outside of their ethnic community (1.00).

The father is identified as being the most conservative with change, the most reticent to adjust. He also describes his position as one of making difficult decisions for the family and says that he worries about having made the wrong decisions, and about putting his family through too much strife. However, his placement score is just near the halfway mark (1.70). Nevertheless, in terms of this family, he has personally scored himself in the middle (2.50), which indicates that although on the emergent side, he sees his family as fairly balanced in their transition. His wife concurs, as does the oldest daughter. Perhaps these are the members who are more likely to see the emotional and intellectual struggles that he may have with such decisions.

***Gibson Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Egalitarian Leadership  
Submergent (4): Macho-man Leadership

Placements on Scale

*Individual's Placement of Family*

Mom	2.10
Dad	2.20
Matt	1.60
Hanna	2.40
Rachel	2.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.06

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.30
Dad	1.60
Matt	2.70
Hanna	2.00
Rachel	2.70

Decision-making and leadership issues form the basis of this construct, and the collective family sees itself as being mostly egalitarian (2.06). The children in this family tend to score towards the macho-man pole, perhaps because they are more aware of the decisions made by their father. It suggests that while the mother and father both know the extent to which their family is led in an egalitarian manner, the children are not as aware. The children are likely observing the father as taking a more macho-man role with them, perhaps with discipline and the introduction of changes. The mother personally scores Matt, the youngest as having the most macho view (3.50), and the father gives high scores to Rachel (4.00) and Matt (3.00). The youngest daughter, Hanna, is collectively viewed by the family as being the child who has the most egalitarian view of the family (2.00).

The father and mother spoke about how they make decisions, and outlined the cultural norms they are expected to follow regarding gender roles. They are both clear about the influence that the mother plays in how decisions are made, and they highlight that they see themselves as very egalitarian in relation to their cultural norms, especially where men traditionally take a very macho-man approach to leadership. Still, the mother is careful to state that while she may be behind many of the decisions, out of a sense of respect for the father's ego and pride, she allows the father to take credit for them.

This family states that they are unusual within their culture with regards to the extent of their collaborative leadership. This is a matter of pride for them.

#### ***Gibson Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Uncertain, Needing Definition

Submergent (4): One Unit, Dissolved into the Family, Aware of Each Other's Needs

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.40
Dad	2.80
Matt	2.8
Hanna	3.60
Rachel	3.80

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 3.08

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	3.60
Dad	3.20
Matt	2.60
Hanna	3.20
Rachel	2.80

In this construct, the family is talking about their individuality within the family unit. They are talking about how the individuals are growing and changing, and are addressing questions of identity both within and outside of the family. They see themselves as being one unit, and as being aware of each other's needs (3.00).

The youngest and oldest children are identified as being the most uncertain. These two children are the most independent, and most influenced by the culture and environment around them. They are clearly questioning who they are. However, their view of the family is slightly on the submergent side.

The mother is the strongest on the submergent side (3.60). This indicates that the family sees her as the most “grounded” within the family as they see it: with an identity most associated with the family, and most subsumed into it. They view her the same way they see her view of the family. On this construct, the father again scores his view on the uncertain pole (2.00), and his wife on the strong, one unit side (4.00). It is often said in the family that the mother has the strong beliefs, and that the father carries them out. Nevertheless, they all acknowledge that culturally, the father is to be seen as the head of the family.

#### ***Gibson Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): Very Emotional  
Submergent (4): Not Showing Emotions

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.90
Dad	2.20
Matt	2.60
Hanna	2.20
Rachel	2.60

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.30

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.30
Dad	3.00
Matt	2.00
Hanna	2.50
Rachel	2.70

This construct deals with how the family handles their emotions. In it, they score themselves slightly towards the submergent pole (2.30), which indicates that they view themselves as quite balanced, but marginally towards the side of not showing emotions.

The mother is viewed most strongly towards the emergent side (1.30). This may indicate that the family believes that she sees them as very emotional and that they support the notion that she provides them with a place to express their emotions. It also suggests that they feel she is most aware of the emotional life of the family.

The father is placed highest on the submergent side (3.00). The family evidently sees him demonstrating fewer emotions, and believes that he sees the family as less emotional. Rachel's score (2.70) is close to her father's. This substantiates my observation that both Rachel and her father have an intellectual approach towards life, and connect with one another on an intellectual level.

#### ***Gibson Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The mean score of the family placement responses across all of the Gibson's shared family constructs was firmly on the emergent side (1.60). These are the constructs that are most obvious and available to them at this time. This indicates that the family sees themselves as operating on the side of being together but isolated, culturally proud, emotional, having egalitarian leadership, and in an unfamiliar context. They feel they are unlikely to experience the submergent side of their constructs, except for on the Uncertain, Needing Definition

construct. For this construct, rather than feeling uncertain and needing definition, they said they felt strongly that they are a unit, and are aware of each other's feelings.

This is a family determined to remain true to the meanings they ascribe to themselves, even though they are far away from their country and extended familial support.

### **6.2.3 The Ball Family**

This family consists of a single mother and her two children. The mother, Tammy, is 26 years of age, her daughter, Charlene, is 8, and her son, Max is 4. The mother has never been married, and is lesbian. She has sole custody of the children and has minimal contact with the children's fathers.

The mother is a fulltime college student, and wanted to participate in the research project specifically because of her daughter, who has a strong interest in art. The mother is very patient and aware. She is also directing towards the children, with her attention on the young son. She views the daughter as being competent and independent. There was some competition between the siblings. The main focus in this family is on gender issues, with the mother determined that her children recognize that females are more than equal to males, and that her son learn the essence of maleness – of which she is not fond.

#### ***Ball Family Scribble Drawings***

Max, the young son, energetically drew blue, circular lines all over his paper, and in consultation with his mother, titled it, "Rollercoaster." The mother and daughter both drew coloured circles on their papers, but gave them no titles.

When asked to choose a scribble to jointly develop, each child wanted it to be theirs, but the mother and daughter decided on the son's. They talked about a previous roller coaster ride in another city, and all added roller coaster cars to the circular lines in Max's picture. They collectively assigned family names to the cars, but the son's name is not included. The daughter suggested the title, "The Colourful Rollercoaster." The picture is individually signed by the two children, but not by the mother.

#### ***Ball Family Drawings***

The mother's representation of her family is shown in Figure 6.10. It is titled, "Us." Note that the family is divided into sections, with males on the left and females on the right. Both figures are smiling. The names in the picture represent friends as well as relatives. The mother explained that her female friends were more of a family to her than were her relatives, and referred to these friends as her "support system."

The daughter's family picture is titled, "My Family" and shows faces of her mother, brother, and herself. The son drew a picture of circular lines, and pointed to specific spots that represented family members: his mother, sister, grandmother Tasha, and himself. He titled his drawing, "Grandma Tasha."

#### ***Ball Family Construct Development***

An analysis of the initial clinic session in which the family did their drawings revealed that the mother views the family as different, organized according to gender, and non-hierarchical. The daughter sees it as being confused, including her father and her maternal grandparents, and not as focussed on her mother. She also depicts the family as mostly smiling. The son sees his family as adult-oriented, going around in circles, not including his sister, and being called after his maternal grandmother.





Figure 6.10. Ball family: Family drawing by Mother entitled "Us"

A summary of this analysis resulted in the following emergent constructs presented for further development: Extended-family Oriented, Grandma Tasha Very Important, Organized According to Gender, Mostly Smiling, Going Around in Circles, and Sometimes Includes Mom and Dad.

#### ***Ball Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The following results are the Ball family's shared family constructs, which they developed out of the initial emergent constructs. Also presented is a discussion of selected results of the scale analysis related to the set of family constructs. As with the other families' results, only collective scores are listed, and explanations of the scaling terms can be found on p. 124.

#### ***Ball Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Support System as Family  
Submergent (4): "Blood" Family

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.16
Charlene	2.00
Max	2.50

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.20

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.60
Charlene	3.00
Max	1.50

This construct addresses the issue of how the family views itself. Is it defined by its support system, or by its "blood family" -- its biological mother and fathers?

The analysis shows that the mother is seen as having a strong sense of the family defined as inclusive of friends (1.60), but the daughter is seen as defining the parameters of the family as more genetically oriented (3.00). The son's age is a factor in understanding how he would see this: Max is four years old, and tends to view all of those around him as being close/family to him.

This construct situates itself mostly on the emergent side (2.21). This implies that there is agreement among family members that they see their family working within a context that includes support systems. However, as the personal totals indicate, the daughter sees herself most strongly on the submergent side of this construct, closest to the blood family side -- something which the mother finds difficult to deal with, as she tries to form a family nucleus comprised mostly of friends.

***Ball Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Grandma Tasha Too Present  
Submergent (4): Family Wouldn't be Together without Her

*Placements on Scale*

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	2.00
Charlene	2.33
Max	4.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.77

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	3.33
Charlene	3.00
Max	2.00

This family constantly reviews whether or not the maternal family is too much of a presence in their lives. The analysis shows that the family views itself as marginally more in need of the grandmother, than otherwise (2.80).

There is dissonance in how the mother and her children view the son's sense of this construct. The mother and the daughter personally indicate that they feel strongly that Max thinks the grandma is too present in their lives (1.00), while he says that they would not be together as a family without her (4.00), and he adamantly scores that he thinks they think that way, too.

The personal totals indicate that the mother identifies most strongly with the emergent side of this construct: that her mother is too present (3.30). The daughter also scores strongly on this side of the construct (3.00).

### ***Ball Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Challenge to Traditional

Submergent (4): Valuing of Traditions

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.00
Charlene	2.00
Max	2.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.00

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	2.00
Charlene	1.00
Max	3.00

This construct demonstrates some dissonance within the family regarding their views of traditional values. The mother and daughter are placed as identifying their family on the emergent side of challenging traditions (2.00), with the daughter personally viewing Max (4.00) as valuing traditions. The mother thinks Max's view is on the challenging side (2.00). The son's personal score indicates a marginal preference for valuing tradition (3.00). There is confusion in this family as to where they stand on this issue.

### ***Ball Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Mostly Smiling

Submergent (4): In Conflict

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.50
Charlene	2.66
Max	2.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.38

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	2.16
Charlene	2.33
Max	2.66

This family has a difficult pathway in life, and makes constant efforts to keep things emotionally positive. In this construct, the family is seen as being on the emergent side (2.38), but marginally towards the conflict pole. However, on an individual scaling, the son saw the mother as mostly smiling (1.00). The conflict rating may be due to the fact that although the mother verbally promotes a positive attitude, unwanted experiences in the family suggest difficulties. For example, the children are not keen on being parented in a non-traditional manner. This was illustrated in one of the daughter's pictures where not everyone is smiling.

### ***Ball Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Seeing the Big Picture  
 Submergent (4): Confused, 'Antsy'\* and Panicky  
 \*(a word used by the family meaning 'irritated')

Placements on Scale

*Individual's Placements of Family:*

Mom	2.16
Charlene	2.66
Max	2.33

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.38

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.66
Charlene	1.66
Max	2.83

In this construct, there is a general leaning towards the submergent pole. Although the scores may be slightly on the submergent side, the personal scores point to the family members being marginally agreeable of "seeing the big picture," and the collective family placement also shows this with its score of 2.38.

The daughter is collectively identified as having a stronger perspective on the emergent side of the pole (1.66), indicating that the family views her as having a greater sense of the big picture in the family than either the mother or the son. Conversely, the mother (2.66) and son (2.83) are identified as being more on the submergent side of the pole in their personal totals, indicating that they are slightly more inclined to view the family as being confused, irritated or panicky. It is of note that the word 'confused' is included in this family's construct, as it is a word that they often used throughout the sessions to describe various aspects of their family.

***Ball Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): Equality in Parenting  
 Submergent (4): Authoritarian Parenting

Placements on Scale

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	2.83
Charlene	2.50
Max	3.33

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.88

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	3.16
Charlene	2.33
Max	3.33

This analysis reflects the differences in how the mother parents her two children. It suggests that the mother's approach has expectations and tolerances that are influenced by gender such that she may parent her daughter differently than her son – an extension of her statement that in general she treats females differently

than males. This underlying theme is represented in several of the family's drawings, notably Figure D6.3 (see Appendix D), which shows that the daughter sees the family as having two distinct sides -- boys and girls.

Personally, the mother thinks that the son sees an authoritarian style of parenting (4.00) and Max concurs: he feels his mother views their family's parenting this way. Charlene, however, is seen to believe that the other members of the family see the family unit more moderately and as situated marginally on the side of equality in parenting (2.50).

The age of the children is again a factor here. The son's age (4 years) requires the mother to approach parenting quite differently towards him, as compared to her approach towards the daughter, who is allowed a significantly greater amount of independence.

#### ***Ball Family Construct #7***

Emergent (1): Single Parent Family  
Submergent (4): Co-parenting

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.66
Charlene	2.66
Max	2.16

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.50

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	2.33
Charlene	2.66
Max	2.50

In this construct, the family situates itself in the middle of the emergent and submergent poles (2.50). Personal scores suggest that neither of the children have a strong opinion towards either pole, although Max does indicate that he sees his mother strongly in a single parenting role (1.00).

Conversely, the mother sees herself strongly in a co-parenting role (4.00), indicating that the children, Max in particular, are not aware of any particular co-parenting that she is doing, and see her as the only parental authority. However, throughout the discussions, the mother talked about the importance of her co-partner and friends, who help her with the parenting of her children.

#### ***Ball Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The results showed that the Ball family most often scored their family placement responses similarly, placing the mean on the emergent side (2.50) across the seven-shared family constructs. The only exceptions to this were the slightly submergent responses on constructs #2 and #3: the family would not be together without their maternal grandmother, and that they appeared to have a type of co-parenting happening within their family.

The Ball's view is that their support system of friends is really their true family, that they challenge traditional concepts, are mostly smiling and seeing the big picture, and have egalitarian parenting within their family. This is a family struggling with determination to be a unique but real family, despite how society may view them.



#### 6.2.4 Whitney Family

The Whitney family includes a widowed mother and her four adolescent children. The mother, Stella, is 38 years of age; her daughters are Mary, age 17, and Mandy, age 15; her sons are Marvin, age 13, and Mac, age 11. The father was killed a few years ago in a truck accident. The mother is a graduate student, and the family has lived for a year in university housing. The children attend nearby schools.

The family presents a relaxed attitude, with the mother acting more like a friendly director. However, all family members struggle with adjusting to new city, school and friends. They miss their hometown. They identify the oldest male, Marvin, as being the focus of the family. His learning disabilities and anti-social behaviours cause them all considerable concern. Because of this situation, it appears that Mac, the youngest male, has taken over the “man of the family” role and is often deferred to in this regard.

##### *Whitney Family Scribbles*

The youngest son, Mac, drew circular lines on his paper, and titled his scribble, “Mushroom.” Mary, the oldest daughter, drew a circle and titled it, “A Circle.” While she was drawing her picture, she kept looking at her brothers, especially the youngest one. Marvin drew one big circle and several dark, smaller ones. Marvin said it was a clubhouse, and his younger brother added, “with no people.” Marvin titled his scribble, “Tag,” which refers to his identity symbol (this is a trend amongst some adolescents, where they give themselves a name/symbol to identify themselves within their gang/group). Mandy drew an oval, with several lines through it, and titled it, “Balloon.” The mother drew a large circle and titled it, “Sphere.” Mac volunteered his scribble as the one to be jointly developed into a family drawing. All agreed, and Figure 6.11 shows the finished family scribble.



Figure 6.11. Whitney family: Joint ‘scribble’ by family entitled “Rainbow Mushroom”

Note the many bright colours are overshadowed by Marvin's sweeps of black chalk. Mac suggested the drawing be called, "Black Mushroom: Life and Death," but the family decided on a more positive title, "Rainbow Mushroom."

### ***Whitney Family Drawings***

In Figure D6.5 (see Appendix D), Mandy's representation of her family was that of a flower, with the petals and stem not connected to it. Each petal had a family member's name on it, with the centre of the flower being the family's name. There was a butterfly on one leaf. Mandy softly explained that when one petal falls, they all fall. She titled her drawing, "Family Flower."

Mary's drawing of her family depicted her family as being a carnival or fair. In Figure 6.22 (p. 286) it can be seen that her picture showed structures of a Ferris wheel, a house of horrors, and a ring of fire. There are no people in her drawing. She said that people come in through the gate and contribute to whether it is calm or whether it is a roller coaster day. She titled her picture, "Circus." This drawing was later connected to a family construct, which was related to these circus-like aspects.

In Figure D6.6 (see Appendix D), Mac drew a huge person to portray his family. He said the person was, "Desperado," and drew two guns on it, because, "they were needed." Mac has a strong interest in war. He printed family member's names over various parts of the body, with mother mostly being portrayed in the brain, heart and upper body. Siblings were portrayed in the limbs, with Mac being portrayed in the right hand. Mac printed the family name as the soul of the person, and titled his drawing, "Body and Soul."

Marvin, the eldest son, drew waves and a sinking boat. Figures in the boat represented rowing family members, with his mother at the back. He said the water was toxic, but that the boat would make it to its destination because everyone was working to keep things going. He titled his drawing, "The Whitney's."

The mother used spheres to represent the family. The largest sphere encircled the others, with an emerging sphere representing the oldest daughter, who would soon be leaving home. The smaller spheres within the large circle were coloured according to gender and personalities, and depicted the other members of the family. The mother coloured her sphere with both pink and blue colours, as she said she plays both parental roles -- even though she, "wasn't acknowledged on Father's Day." This was the only mention of the deceased father. The mother titled her picture, "Family Moment."

### ***Whitney Family Construct Development***

Results of the clinic analysis of the family's drawings and related behaviours reveal that the family sees itself in several different ways. The mother views it as off-centre, changing, active, and organized according to gender. The sons see it as a unit that is reasonable, sheltered, not good at communicating, and desperate at times. The daughters depict it as fragile, changing, and sometimes scary. Opinions differ as to whether the unit, or the individual, is the focus. All members are proud of their family name.

The following emergent constructs resulted from the analysis, and were presented to the family for further development: Nurturing-caring, A Circus, Maturing and Changing, Individuals, Needs to be Led and Held Together, Allies, and Pressured, Stormy, in Peril.

### ***Whitney Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

Below are the shared family constructs that the Whitney family developed, as well as a discussion of the results of the scale analysis relating to these constructs. Personal scores are not listed, and explanations of the scaling terms were presented on p. 124.

### ***Whitney Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): A Circus

Submergent (4): Relaxed, Focussed, Organized

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.40
Mac	2.88
Marvin	2.80
Mandy	2.70
Mary	2.80

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.71

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.94
Mac	2.70
Marvin	3.70
Mandy	3.04
Mary	2.75

The Whitney family here discusses the chaos and "freakiness" that they sometimes feel in regards to their family life. Interestingly, while Mary drew her family as a circus, in this construct she puts them marginally on the submergent side of being relaxed, focussed and organized (2.80). Overall, the family places themselves fairly close to the middle (2.71), perhaps going back and forth depending on the day or circumstances.

Of interest, too, is that the mother is identified as being the person who sees the family as most like a circus (1.94), and she is also the only family member to rate the family close to the emergent side of this construct.

The family rates Marvin, the oldest son, as seeing them as relaxed, focussed and organized (3.70). This could suggest that he is balanced by the family and therefore views them overall as a relaxed, focussed, and organized group, in relation to him. It is of interest that the family members who appeared most chaotic are the ones who indicate that they see their family as most relaxed and focussed, while the members who appeared most relaxed and focussed (the mother in particular) see the family as most like a circus.

### ***Whitney Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Individuals

Submergent (4): 'Whitney' Name, Mini-society, a Family, Bonded by Relationships

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.50
Mac	2.20
Marvin	2.00
Mandy	2.70
Mary	2.40

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.24



#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.60
Mac	2.20
Marvin	1.70
Mandy	2.50
Mary	2.20

In this construct, the family describes their sense of identity. Overall, they score themselves close to the emergent pole (2.24), indicating that they tend to see themselves as marginally on the side of individual identities.

The strongest score belongs to Marvin. The family clearly regarded him as being on the side of individual identity (1.70). This was perhaps due to the emotional struggles they were having with him at the time; for example, he had recently spent time in short-term foster care. Therefore, Marvin's insistence that the family acknowledge his individuality could come from his desire to separate himself from the family identity. After all, this is a family predominately composed of adolescents. Each of the children has been scored on the 'individuals' side of the construct, except for Mandy, who is fairly central.

It is interesting that it is Mac and Mary, the youngest and the oldest children, who scored the mother on the submergent side (both scoring 3.50), indicating that they both see her as strongly identified by the family. My perception of Mac and Mary was that they were both in positions of adult responsibility and thus had a different perception of what the mother was doing to hold the family together and to provide a sense of belonging and shared identification. It appeared that Mac was seen as the most important male in the family, because there was no father and because of the eldest son's weaker position (i.e. dyslexia, behavioural problems). Mary was seen as the most responsible daughter, and the closest to the mother.

Regarding this family's overall sense of individuality, it is of note that this is reflected in Mandy's drawing of the flower. She drew the petals as unconnected and not touching. The petals represented family members.

#### *Whitney Family Construct #3*

Emergent (1): Communicating in the Present, Talking about Good Things, Staying in the Moment 'Cause it's Safe'

Submergent (4): Holding Grudges, Don't Talk at All, Worrying That the Past Could Repeat, Future's Unsafe

#### Placements on Scale

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.70
Mac	2.30
Marvin	2.20
Mandy	2.00
Mary	2.10

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.06

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.00
Mac	1.50
Marvin	1.80
Mandy	2.86
Mary	2.14

This construct refers to the death of the father in this family and to the abuse that was experienced because of him when he was alive. It also refers to how the family communicates about the difficult past that they have shared.

The family identifies that Mac is the one who most strongly views the family towards the emergent pole (1.50) -- that of living in the moment. The mother, however, is the one who is closest to the emergent side in her score of viewing the family (1.70). Overall, the entire family scored quite central (2.06), averaging slightly on the emergent side. This indicates that as a family, they generally talk about the good things in the past and present.

Mandy is identified most on the submergent side. The family identifies her as the one who does not talk a lot, holds grudges, and worries that the past could repeat. Her score of herself is exactly the same as what the family gave her.

#### ***Whitney Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Needs to be Led and Held Together

Submergent (4): Family is Divided, Siding, "Beats on" One Another, Being Looked After

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.30
Mac	2.74
Marvin	1.80
Mandy	2.38
Mary	2.20

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.28

##### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	1.70
Mac	2.10
Marvin	3.02
Mandy	2.10
Mary	2.50

This analysis deals with the polar issues of togetherness and division. Here, the mother acknowledges the need for leadership in this family. On a personal score, she scores herself directly on the emergent pole (1.00), indicating that she feels that the family needs the leadership and structure that contains it. She acknowledges too, that her family does not all feel that way, personally giving Marvin a high submergent score (3.50) regarding her impressions of his view of the family, which are that the family is divided and being looked after.

The family's total score is just past the midway mark towards the emergent pole (2.28). This suggests that in general, they agree that the family is led and held together but that it is tenuous, divided, siding and beating on each other.

Marvin's overall view of the family is surprising in that his score (1.80) suggests that the family does not need leadership and that it is held together. However, his Family's Placement Score (3.02) suggests the opposite: that the family views him as seeing the family as being divided and close to the submergent pole. On a personal score, Marvin gave Mary a top submergent score (4.00), which he indicated referred to his resentment of

her taking on a leadership role in the family and that he sees her perceiving the family as totally divided and siding.

#### ***Whitney Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Maturing and Changing

Submergent (4): Chaos and Carnage

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.40
Mac	3.10
Marvin	2.46
Mandy	2.50
Mary	2.40

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.65

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	2.10
Mac	2.00
Marvin	2.96
Mandy	3.10
Mary	3.10

In this construct the Whitney family talks about how they perceive themselves with regards to the changes they are making, and with what these changes represent. The scores indicate that overall, the family members see themselves on the side of chaos and carnage by a slight margin (2.65). This mixture of feelings can be seen in the previous Figure 6.11, the Whitney's joint scribble drawing, which although consisting of bright colours, was engulfed in black. A suggested pre-title of that picture had included the phrase, "Life and Death."

Mac's placement by the family is the highest towards the emergent pole: that of maturing and changing (2.00). Yet, he places the family close to the submergent pole of chaos, which is the furthest placement of all towards that pole (3.10). Perhaps of significance here is that he sees himself and Mary more on the side of maturing and changing. He hints at his admiration for Mary by suggesting that she has a more optimistic view of the family, as does he.

Marvin also identifies the people with whom he feels confident in regards to their perception of the problem. He personally scores Mac exactly on the emergent pole (1.00), indicating that he believes Mac views the family as very much in a process of maturing and changing. He also scores his mother directly on that pole. Furthermore, he scores Mandy and Mary exactly on the submergent pole (4.00), suggesting that he thinks they see the family as overwhelmed with chaos and carnage. It is interesting that both Mandy and Mary seem to be struggling with feeling safe around Marvin, especially because of his recent violence.

#### ***Whitney Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): Nurturing, Caring

Submergent (4): Selfish, Aggressive, Immature, Finger Pointing

#### **Placements on Scale**

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	2.40
Mac	2.88
Marvin	2.80
Mandy	2.70
Mary	2.80

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.69

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.94
Mac	2.70
Marvin	3.60
Mandy	3.04
Mary	2.02

An overall score of the family's ratings on this construct (2.69) shows that as a unit, they see themselves marginally on the submergent side; towards being selfish and aggressive. They are clearly struggling with questions of development and everyday living, the effects of the trauma regarding the alleged abuse by their father, and their father's accidental death. While they all place the overall family within a slight percentage on the scale, they clearly identify -- with wider variation -- the different family member's views of the family. For example, the mother's view is the lowest (1.94), indicating that the family sees her as viewing the family as nurturing and caring. By contrast, Marvin is seen by the family as viewing them the most strongly on this construct (3.60), with Mandy's score also being high (3.04), suggesting that they both view the family on the side of being selfish and aggressive.

It appears that these two individuals are identified as the most troubled in the family, and with whom the most conflicts occur. They both experience the family as being troubled, with Marvin's view being significantly more extreme. This is likely because of the current context, though the past trauma is also a factor. Marvin's learning disabilities require him to receive a lot of nurturing and care, but the family sees the acting-out behaviour as selfish, aggressive, immature and finger pointing.

Both the mother and Mary are seen to view the family on the emergent side of this construct. As they are both in nurturing roles, the mother being the primary nurturer, and Mary being her "assistant parent," it makes sense that they would share this perspective of the family as being and requiring nurturing.

***Whitney Family Construct #7***

Emergent (1): Equals, Family is Extremely Feminine  
Submergent (4): Gendered Organization

*Placements on Scale*

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.80
Mac	2.20
Marvin	2.80
Mandy	2.20
Mary	2.10

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.26

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.00
Mac	2.50
Marvin	2.80
Mandy	2.30
Mary	1.70

Their approach to authority in the family, regarding its feminine quality (e.g. everyone leaning towards the female stereotype of being emotionally sensitive, nurturing, and geared to looking after details, etc.), or its according-to-gender organization, is seen in this construct. Overall, the family scores slightly over the middle (2.26), indicating that they see the family as having a marginally feminine and equal quality to it.

Identifying specific scores, Mary is perceived as the family member who would view the family as most equal and feminine (1.70). The mother follows closely (2.00), except for the high submergent score (4.00) given to her personally by Marvin, and the lower score given to her by Mac. Marvin's response may have been exaggerated, considering the fact that while he was giving it, he was being chastised by his mother and sister for his aggressive behaviours.

In her placement of the family, the mother identifies them all individually on the emergent side and she also scores the family as a whole close to it. This could be due to the influence of female family leadership. With the mother being the primary parent and Mary backing her up, the structure suggests equality and femininity regarding approaches to discipline, chores, and family activities.

#### ***Whitney Family Construct #8***

Emergent (1): Pressured, Stormy, in Peril  
Submergent (4): Calm, Fun, Easier to Deal With

#### *Placements on Scale*

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	2.90
Mac	1.50
Marvin	2.80
Mandy	2.44
Mary	2.40

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.46

##### *Family Placements of Individuals:*

Mom	2.62
Mac	2.20
Marvin	2.90
Mandy	2.82
Mary	1.80

On this construct, the family generally situates itself centrally but slightly towards the emergent pole of being pressured, stormy, and in peril.

Mac (2.20) and Mary (1.80) are the ones most perceived to view the family as emergent. Mary in particular, is seen to view the family this way, which could have to do with her activities surrounding authority and leadership. Although she has a leadership role, she also struggles with her own pressures, as well as the

responsibilities and worries of caring for the family and its many problems and perils. She displays a sense of confidence, despite her youth and lack of experience.

Marvin (2.90) and Mandy (2.82) are scored more strongly towards the submergent pole. They may be viewed by the family as having an easier time; not having to carry the burden of responsibility that Mary and Mac experience. Mary is portrayed as the assistant parent, and Mac as the “man of the family,” given his brother’s learning disabilities and related problems. Mac also feels he needs to protect the family in the community: especially his brother and sisters, when Marvin is being teased, picked on, or getting into trouble.

#### ***Whitney Family Construct #9***

Emergent (1): Allies  
Submergent (4): Traitors

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual’s Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.10
Mac	3.00
Marvin	2.80
Mandy	2.30
Mary	2.50

***Family’s Placement of Family:*** 2.54

##### ***Family’s Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	2.10
Mac	2.89
Marvin	3.40
Mandy	2.00
Mary	2.10

In this construct, the family is saying that there is a general but subtle sense of betrayal amongst the children. The overall score is slightly over the middle, situating the family just on the submergent side of traitors.

Marvin is most strongly seen to view the family as traitors, with a high score close to the top of the submergent pole (3.40), with which he concurs on his view of the family (2.80). He also personally scores his mother the highest (4.00), perceiving that she, too, sees the family as traitors. Mandy sees the family being more close to allies (2.30), with Mary and the mother’s placements being fairly similar. Most scores are on the side of allies.

This family is in a difficult transition period. They long for their small community where they knew who their allies were, and did not have to defend themselves or worry about traitors. This situation of taking sides is now occurring within their own family, for example with Mac defending Marvin – sometimes to the disgust of the other family members. Family members are occasionally caught in the dilemma of not knowing who is on whose side.

#### ***Whitney Family Construct #10***

Emergent (1): Nomads  
Submergent (4): Less Stress, More Predictable Routines, More Ties in the Community

### Placements on Scale

#### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	3.00
Mac	2.78
Marvin	2.20
Mandy	1.92
Mary	1.70

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.32

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.20
Mac	2.90
Marvin	1.82
Mandy	2.74
Mary	1.94

This construct regards the family's current situation: specifically, their temporary placement in the city. Generally, they see themselves slightly towards the submergent pole (2.32). Marvin (1.82) and Mary (1.94) are the two identified by the family as viewing the family most strongly on the side of nomads. This is reflected in Marvin's family drawing, where he drew them in a boat that was experiencing trouble, but would be arriving at its destination. Mary's concern about where she would live upon her upcoming graduation from high school may be a factor in her perception of the family as being one on the move. Marvin and Mary's scores imply that they are viewed by the family as in motion and transient, fondly remembering earlier times in their lives when they too, were in the submergent position. Mandy also views the family as nomads (1.92), but is not viewed by the family (2.74) as seeing them that way.

The mother (3.00) and Mac (2.78) are the two who feel that the family is most settled into routines, and most tied to the community. This may be true for the mother, because of her university program and her boyfriend. For Mac, it may be related to his age and adaptability, or to him having found some sense of community. This family wants to feel settled.

#### ***Whitney Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The Whitney's mean score on the family placement response for the shared family constructs was on the emergent side. (2.42). The exceptions were two slightly submergent scores, which indicated feelings of relaxation, focus and organization, as well as those of being selfish, aggressive, immature and finger-pointing.

Overall, the family was fairly consumed with discerning their identities, improving their communications, and acknowledging that they were equal, maturing and changing, but needing to be held together. All were well aware that they were in peril and felt pressured, but displayed a strong determination to look after one another in this difficult and complex time of their lives. They have a strong mother in their midst.

#### ***6.2.5 The Rosen Family***

The Rosen family consists of a widowed father, his son and daughter. Doug, the father is 52 years of age, his son Andy is 7, and his daughter, April is 4. The son is the most assertive member of the family. The mother was killed in an automobile accident four months ago, and the father has taken a leave of absence from his work so that he can more easily care for his children. The family lives in a condominium complex, across from a spacious park. Although the father has a sense of optimism about him, the sadness and grief over the mother's death permeates the family's every moment. Each member is struggling with this profound loss.

An important part of this family's analysis was that of the input of the youngest member: the daughter, April, who is four years of age. At the outset of the study, there was a question as to whether or not she would be able to involve herself in a manner that would answer the research requirements of being able to adequately interact, e.g., draw family pictures and explain them, as well as being able to comment on other aspects of her family. She consistently proved that she could do these tasks. She was particularly verbal and articulate, appeared able to understand the questions that were asked of her, and responded fairly easily. During some of the more complex rating activities, she sometimes had a question put to her an additional time, or had it explained to her a bit differently, but it was felt that she accurately grasped the concept and responded accurately to it.

#### ***Rosen Family Scribble Drawings***

Andy drew circular scribbles on his paper, and titled his drawing, "The Musket." He also added a telephone to his drawing, after he noticed that his sister had drawn one. April drew a stick with a line on it, and said it was a telephone. She titled her picture, "Spot." The father drew scribbled lines, over and over, and named his drawing, "Waves," saying that things go back and forth in life.

The family decided to use April's drawing as their joint effort. Several images of animals were drawn, with many circles and colour smudges also included. The picture was titled, "Crabbish Spot" by the aware father, combining the desire of the son, who wanted it to be about crabs, and the request of the daughter that it be about a spot.

#### ***Rosen Family Drawings***

To represent his family, Andy drew an interior view of his house. He included a kitchen with a table and four chairs, and several other rooms. In the middle he drew figures to represent his family members, including the paternal grandmother. Andy drew himself bigger than everyone and above everyone. He also drew pictures of their pets. His focus was on the living things in their house. Andy named his drawing, "My Family."

April drew a large, blue line around the edge of her paper and drew herself in a blue colour. She encircled herself with many coloured dots, and then drew a coffin-shaped box in front of her. She offered no explanation, and as can be seen in Figure D6.4 (see Appendix D), she titled her picture, "Family."

The father drew a pathway in a park. On the pathway he drew figures of himself, his mother, his son, and his daughter. While he was drawing, his son constantly challenged him. At one point, Andy came over to his father and said that his mother should be in the drawing as an angel up in a cloud. The father asked Andy to draw her. April came over and sat on her father's lap and asked that the grandfather also be put in the cloud, and then to put God between the mother and the grandfather. Andy said that God is everywhere -- at which point the father picked up his pencil and angrily drew lines all over his picture, saying, "Yes, God is everywhere." It was a dramatic moment for us all. He titled his drawing, "Path in the Park," which is shown in Figure 6.12.

#### ***Rosen Family Construct Development***

Analysis of the family member's initial drawings and related behaviours revealed that the father views the family as including his mother, being on a journey, feeling anger, and needing help. The son portrays his family as every living thing in his house, as well as his mother and grandmother. The daughter sees her family stuck at the funeral, herself with her mother's coffin, and being out of reach.

A summary of this analysis resulted in the following emergent constructs which were given to the Rosen family to develop into shared family constructs: On a Journey, Connected to Extended Family for Support, At



Home in Their House, Suffering and Grieving About Mom, and Reaching Out and Trying Hard to Express Themselves.



Figure 6.12. Rosen family: Family drawing by Father entitled "Path in the Park"

### ***Rosen Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The Rosen family's developed shared family constructs are presented below. Also discussed are the results of the scale analysis relating to each one of the constructs. Scaling terms were previously presented on p. 124, and personal scores are not listed.

#### ***Rosen Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): On a Journey

Submergent (4): Unexpected Twists and Turns

#### ***Placements on Scale***

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Dad	3.33
April	3.33
Andy	2.33

*Family's Placement of Family:* 3.00

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Dad	3.66
April	3.66
Andy	1.66

This construct addresses the attitude of the family towards the significant changes in their lives: specifically how they conceive of the death of the mother.

Overall, the family rates themselves towards the submergent pole (3.00), indicating that they view the changes as being primarily a matter of handling unexpected twists and turns. Both the father and daughter clearly feel that they are facing unexpected twists and turns, as they have both given themselves top scores on the submergent pole (3.33). Overall, their personal scores are also very high on this pole.

The son, however, seems to view their family as being on a journey (2.33), which the entire family agrees he sees (1.66). Thus, it can be seen that the son has a different approach to change, and is handling emotional concerns in ways different from that of his father and sister. It is of note that the son's schoolteacher is concerned about bursts of anger that she has witnessed: behaviour that the father had also observed.

### ***Rosen Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Connected to Extended Family for Support

Submergent (4): Angry at Them

#### Placements on Scale

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Dad	2.33
April	3.00
Andy	1.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.11

##### *Family's Placements of Individuals:*

Dad	2.66
April	1.66
Andy	2.00

Emotions and support are involved in this construct. The family situates itself near to the halfway mark (2.11), seeing themselves as being connected to the family for support. The father is marginally close to the submergent pole (2.33), indicating that he believes the family has mixed feelings about accepting support from his mother and brother. The daughter supports this idea and in personally allocating her father a top score on the submergent pole (4.00), suggests that her father sees the family as being quite angry at the extended family.

The son evidently views the family as absolutely connected to the extended family. He seems to think that without a doubt, the extended family is required for support and that they all know it.

### ***Rosen Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): At Home in Their House

Submergent (4): Problems, Scary Feelings

#### Placements on Scale

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Dad	4.00
April	3.33

Andy	3.00
<i>Family's Placement of Family:</i>	3.44
<i>Family's Placements of Individuals:</i>	
Dad	3.33
April	4.00
Andy	3.00

Here the family talks about their emotional concerns following the death of the mother. The father identifies the family as dealing intensely with problems and scary feelings, much of which have to do with re-adjusting to living in their house without the mother. The family's overall score is strongly on the submergent side of problems and scary feelings (3.44). The daughter is too young to understand her mother's death and struggles with it in her drawings. She is personally identified by each member of the family as being entirely on the side of problems and scary feelings, and she talks constantly about her nightmares. The son sees himself as viewing the family somewhat in the middle of the two poles (2.00), feeling more at home in his house, but still acknowledging problems.

#### ***Rosen Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Suffering and Grief about Mom  
Submergent (4): Distracted and Healing

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Dad	2.33
April	1.66
Andy	2.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.00

##### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Dad	3.00
April	1.00
Andy	2.00

In this construct the family talks openly about their grief and healing. Overall, the family is scored somewhat in the middle of the construct (2.00), which suggests that they see themselves as moving towards healing and getting on with their lives.

A notable exception to this is the daughter, who is clearly identified by the family (1.00) as being consumed with suffering and grief over her mother's death. This is likely because of her age, and how recently this happened. All of the members miss the mother terribly, and the long-term implications of her death are setting in. Also, it perhaps has something to do with the relationship that April had with her mother, in that she was "mother's little girl," and doted upon by her mother.

The father is personally allocated high scores (3.00) by all family members. He acknowledges the loss of the nurturing mother role model for his daughter, and how this is significant for her in particular. The son is in

school fulltime, and has other things to occupy his mind. Also, he is older, and more able to place this death into a context and believe that his mother is “up in the clouds with God,” as in the father’s family drawing. His view of the family as healing (2.00) supports this.

The family concurs that the father views them as solidly oriented towards distracted and healing. This is seen in his attempts to move on with his life and refocus his grief and anger about his wife’s death onto more banal circumstances in his environment: for example, a situation with his neighbour.

#### ***Rosen Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Reaching Out and Trying Hard to Express

Submergent (4): Not Talking, Being Busy

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### *Individual’s Placement of Family:*

Dad	2.66
April	2.66
Andy	4.00

*Family’s Placement of Family:* 3.44

##### *Family’s Placements of Individuals:*

Dad	4.00
April	3.33
Andy	3.00

This analysis again shows how the family is trying to handle their emotional concerns. The father is the one who is absolutely identified with the submergent side of this construct -- an avoidance of grief -- and personally scores himself (4.00) as viewing the family completely on the side of not talking and being busy. He has busied himself so profoundly that his family does not even see him reaching out at all to express himself. The family has scored him as viewing the family at the top of the submergent pole (4.00). Evidently the son also feels strongly that the family is not talking about things and keeping busy, since he scored his family (3.66) near the top of the submergent pole, as well.

The father identifies the family view of his son and daughter as attempting to reach out and be expressive, and gives his children scores generally in the middle, but on the side of the emergent pole (2.00). It is evident to everyone that the father tries very hard to handle the difficult situation in his family in the best way possible, and that he is devoting all of his time and energy towards this goal. During one of the home sessions, the daughter voiced her concern that her father looked lonely, and encouraged him to go with his grown-up friends to a local (children’s) restaurant, “where he could have lots of fun!”

#### ***Rosen Family Scale Analysis Summary***

This entire family’s mean score on family placements of their shared family constructs is slightly on the side of the submergent pole (2.80). Three of their constructs were close to the top of this side; reflecting problems and scary feelings, of having unexpected twists and turns in their current journey through life, and of being too busy to talk things out. On the average, they feel they are suffering and grieving about the death of their mother but have some support from their extended family. This family is trying to stabilize itself, and to acquire the sense of normality it once had. However, the overall impression is that this family is not doing too well.

### 6.2.6 The Williams Family

This nuclear family consists of a father, mother, son and daughter. The father, Patrick is 48 years of age, as is his wife, Susan. The daughter, Cerise, is 13 years of age, and the son, Paddy, is 9 years of age. The father works in and out of the home. The mother is not employed, but she does a lot of volunteer work in activities that involve her children, who attend local schools. This family is focussed on the children, and special interest is paid to the daughter who has just become a “teen-ager;” a fact which is mentioned often by the parents. The mother stated that they had joined the research because it presented an opportunity for a family activity.

#### *Williams Family Scribble Drawings*

Both of the parents’ scribbles were drawn in a controlled, structured manner and contained swirls and curves. The mother titled her red scribble, “Roller Coaster,” and the father’s brown scribble was named, “Amoeba.” The daughter’s clear, precise, orange scribble appeared spacious and well thought out. She titled it, “Flexible Snail.” The son scribbled several green circles on his paper, and titled his drawing, “The Weight.”

The daughter, Cerise, suggested that her brother’s scribble be chosen as the one to develop, and they all agreed. This drawing is shown in Figure 6.13. The title given to this joint drawing was, “The Weighted Angel on Wheels,” which reflects the original title, “The Weight,” but adds a different touch. Note how the joint drawing has human characteristics and a sense of lightness. This theme of heaviness and lightness became the basis of one of the family’s later shared constructs. It was determined that the family vacillated between being grounded and daydreaming, a concept which first emerged in this family’s scribble drawing.

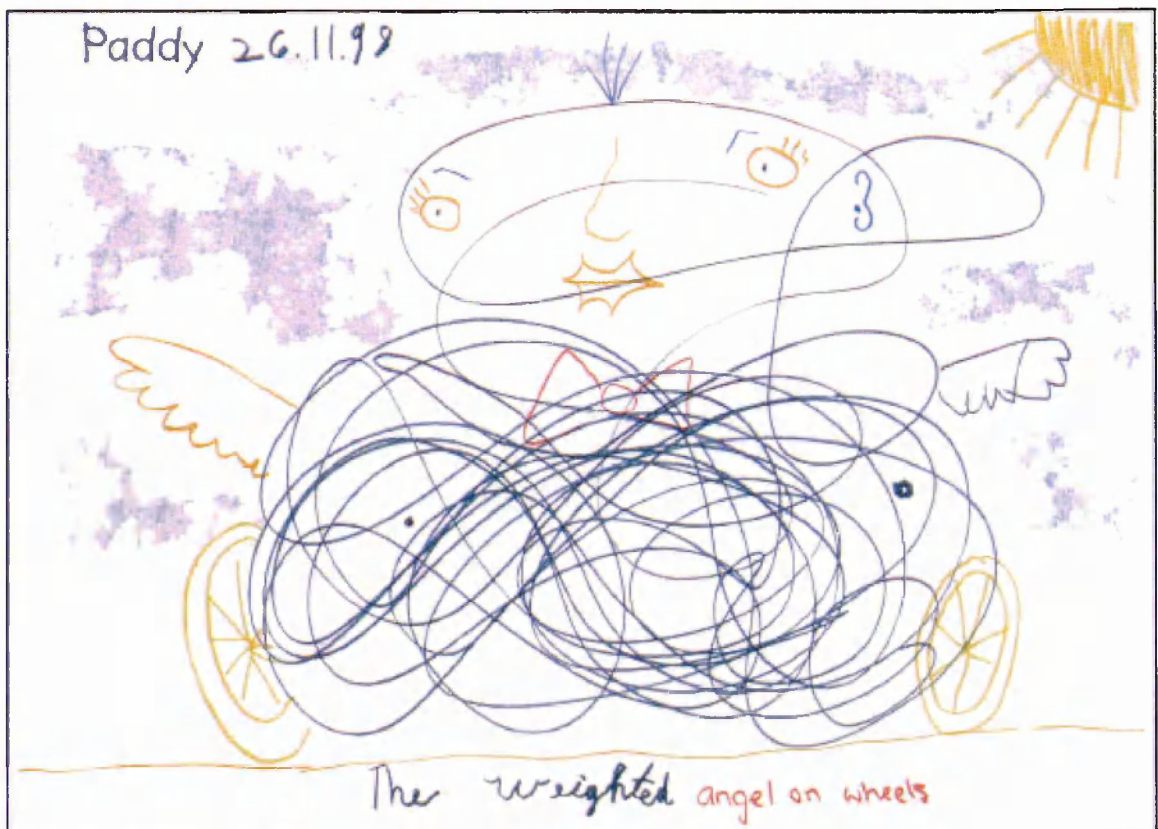


Figure 6.13. Williams family: Joint ‘scribble’ by family entitled “The Weighted Angel on Wheels”

### ***Williams Family Drawings***

The father's representation of his family included all the family members riding on a merry-go-round, with mother and Cerise portrayed first, and the father bringing up the rear. He titled his drawing, "The Round-A-Bout."

The mother drew a round, blue circle with four family heads in it. The mother is at the top, with Cerise, the father and Paddy next. It is a cool and calm family representation, which the mother titled, "Together."

The daughter drew her family as four stick figures in an age-related row. The father is first in line, and Paddy, her brother is depicted in the brightest colour. Cerise titled her drawing, "First Glance."

Paddy's family drawing was that of a computer: something of great importance in this family. All of the family members are shown in the picture, with Cerise drawn as the largest, and Paddy the smallest but highest. Paddy titled his drawing, "The Computer."

### ***Williams Family Construct Development***

In this family's drawings, reflections and related behaviours, it was revealed that the mother views her family as wanting to experience various cultural aspects of society (e.g. art, music, theatre, books), and that it is held together and protected by her. The father indicated in his drawings and behaviours that he sees the family as being active, grounded, detailed and having direction. The children see their family as being odd (e.g. they think their parents dress and act in an old-fashioned way), happy, expressive, and secure but reaching out.

Results of this analysis include the following emergent constructs that were presented to the family to develop into a set of shared family constructs: Communicative and Cooperative, Happy and Content, Well-educated and High Standards, Grounded, Down to Earth and Realistic, Outdoorsy, Active and Busy and Together, Close, Interdependent, Private.

### ***Williams Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The following is the set of the Williams' shared family constructs and a discussion of the results of the scale analysis related to them. For sake of brevity, personal scores are not listed, and explanations of scaling terms are on p. 124.

### ***Williams Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Communicative and Cooperative  
Submergent (4): Uncooperative, Unwilling, Rebellious

### ***Placements on Scale***

#### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.25
Dad	2.50
Cerise	2.62
Paddy	2.80

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.56

#### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	1.87
Dad	2.75
Cerise	3.25
Paddy	2.37

In this construct, which deals with communication patterns, the children score the family highest: marginally on the submergent side of being uncooperative, unwilling, and rebellious. However, their family placement demonstrates that the family believes that Cerise views them quite strongly on the submergent side (3.25) with the father following (2.75). This aspect of the father being viewed and viewing the family as more towards uncooperative, indicates that he perhaps has some sense of rebelliousness himself. Cerise is also perceived by her parents to be moving into the teen-age years, which are often stereotyped as being rebellious ones. Nevertheless, the father and Cerise are observed as being a close unit. During the home sessions, they sat together on the same chair (with the daughter on the father's knee), and constantly discussed between them matters of academic and leisure interests. At times, the father looked awkward about the physical closeness that his adolescent daughter appeared to promote. It seemed that he was trying to find more appropriate ways of physical closeness/communication with his daughter in her emerging teen-age years. The family is very aware of how they communicate with each other.

The mother is most on the emergent side, and the family collectively agrees that she sees them that way (1.87). Overall, the family is fairly central, but marginally on the side of the submergent pole (2.56) of being uncooperative, unwilling and rebellious. This family appears to have many facets of independent thinking within it.

#### ***Williams Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Happy and Content

Submergent (4): Distraught, Stressed, Anxious and Annoyed

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.62
Dad	2.25
Cerise	2.37
Paddy	2.37

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.40

##### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	2.12
Dad	2.37
Cerise	3.62
Paddy	1.50

In this analysis of emotions, the family scores quite centrally, with each individual rating the family within 0.4 of one another. The collective family view is that of being on the emergent side (2.40) of being happy and content. However, there is considerable variation in the individual placement. For example, both children personally score each other highly (4.00) as seeing the family as being stressed, but the daughter scores her father as seeing it as content (1.00). This suggests agreement regarding the positioning of the family in relation to the construct, but conflict within the family regarding how they experience the construct. The son is collectively scored low (1.50), which indicates that the family all agree that he is quite strongly on the side of happy and content. Cerise is scored highly (4.00), which suggests that the family see her as viewing the family as distraught.

It is an observation that Cerise seems to generally be questioning things a lot. The parents are marginally on the side of happy and content.

### ***Williams Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Educated and High Standards  
Submergent (4): Couch Potato, Bored, "Vegged Out"

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.25
Cerise	2.25
Paddy	2.62

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 1.78

##### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	1.12
Dad	1.37
Cerise	2.37
Paddy	2.25

This family scores clearly on the emergent side of this construct (1.78). Education and high standards are obviously valued and experienced within this family.

Cerise and Paddy are known to fight over the television's remote control, and are prone to long bouts of "couch potatoing." They see themselves, and are seen as viewing the family with higher scores than the parents, indicating that they see the family as being quiet and non-active, rather than striving towards high standards. In fact, the daughter says that she wakes up every morning at 5:00 A.M. in order to have time to relax or listen to music. This is not a typical adolescent activity. The son acknowledges this with his personal score of his sister's view (4.00), indicating that she sees the whole family like her. It is also observed that the daughter finds academic achievement fairly easy, whereas the son finds it more difficult. This may explain the daughter's "vegged-out" identity with the family.

### ***Williams Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Grounded, Down to Earth  
Submergent (4): Daydreaming, Spontaneous, Overly Ambitious, Blue Sky

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.20
Dad	2.25
Cerise	2.50
Paddy	3.12

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.46

##### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	2.50
-----	------



Dad	1.87
Cerise	2.87
Paddy	2.62

In this construct about attitudes, the family collectively scores themselves just near the middle (2.46), which implies that they are fairly balanced between grounded and daydreaming.

The family identifies that they see the father as the one who views the family as most down to earth (1.87), while the mother actively personally scores the family mostly toward the emergent pole. Paddy's Individual Placement of Family on the scale (3.12) is most towards the submergent side, largely because he sees his parents and sister as strongly daydreaming, spontaneous, and ambitious. Paddy cannot personally or academically afford to be like this. This construct also identifies the parents' struggle between acceptance and expectations, in that the family has to come to terms with the reality of their situation regarding the children's differing abilities -- and not expect or daydream about more.

#### ***Williams Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Outdoorsy, Active, Busy

Submergent (4): Couch Potato, Isolated, Frustrated

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.25
Dad	1.50
Cerise	1.37
Paddy	2.50

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 1.90

##### ***Family's Placement of Family***

Mom	1.50
Dad	1.62
Cerise	2.50
Paddy	2.00

This construct deals with family activities, and the overall family total indicates that they see themselves as being on the emergent side of being outdoorsy, active, and busy (1.90).

The mother is identified here as viewing the family mostly on the emergent side (1.50), with the father being close to her score (1.62). The children also score the family mostly towards the emergent, which makes sense with regards to the description that father and daughter like to hike together and are both more interested in sports and activities than are the mother or son. The mother and son's Individual Placements are fairly similar on the submergent side, and observations indicated that both felt frustrated about Paddy's family and academic struggles. There are some dyads emerging in this family.

#### ***Williams Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The Williams' mean response regarding family placement on their shared family constructs is on the emergent side (2.22). They therefore perceive their family as happy, grounded, active, communicative, cooperative, educated, and having high standards. This family is interactive in its attitudes and behaviours. They are well aware of how they view and affect one another.

### 6.2.7 The Badgley Family

This single parent family consists of the mother, Christine, who was divorced two years ago and has sole custody of her ten year old son, Carson. The mother is aged 29, and is a fulltime university student. Her son attends a nearby school. The family lives in family housing on campus. The son has intermittent visits with his father, who lives in a nearby suburb. Christine's main focus is that she and Carson maintain a stable family unit in which they can be happy and successful. The mother's academic program is also a high priority.

#### ***Badgley Family Scribble Drawings***

Carson's scribble consisted of methodically drawn, blue flowing lines across the paper. He titled his drawing, "Weird." The mother rhythmically drew pointed lines across the paper and named her picture, "Rainbows and Stars."

When asked to choose a scribble to jointly develop, Carson, without hesitating, began developing his own picture into a snake. The mother joined him with a suggestion that they draw a ship. The result was that of a canoe with oars, and faceless people as passengers. The mother detailed the front of the boat in a favourite colour and image, and the son worked on other details. He titled the drawing, "Weird Ship," and developed a signature that combined both of their names.

#### ***Badgley Family Drawings***

To represent his family, (see Appendix D, Figure D6.7) Carson drew black, smiling stick figures, and identified them as being his father, his mother, his cat and himself. All of the figures were joined together. Carson saw this as his family unit; a controversial issue that later became the focus of their first shared family construct.

The mother's family drawing is presented in Figure 6.14.



Figure 6.14. Badgley family: Family drawing by Mother entitled "Carson and I, a Spiritual Portrait"

The mother explained that Carson and she are alone within the sphere, encircled and intertwined. Purple represents her, and blue represents Carson. The mother sees herself and Carson as the family unit. This enmeshed/fused drawing became the basis for one of the family constructs that they later developed: one that focussed on conceptual thinking vs. linear thinking. The mother titled her drawing, "Family: Carson and I, a Spiritual Portrait."

### ***Badgley Family Construct Development***

The clinical analysis of the Badgley's drawings and related behaviours revealed the mother's view of the family as conceptually oriented, in need of protection, proceeding anxiously forward, and consisting of her and her son. Carson perceives his family as being concrete, having no power or leader to go forward, and including himself, his cat, and both of his parents.

This analysis resulted in five emergent constructs that were presented to the family for the development of their shared family constructs. They were as follows: Clearly Delineated, In Transition, Moving Toward the Future but Uncertain, Unsettled About This, Happy, and Conceptual.

### ***Badgley Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The following presents the Badgley family's shared family constructs, as well as a discussion of the scale analysis results of each construct. Explanations of scaling terms are presented on p. 124.

### ***Badgley Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Family is Mom and Dad  
Submergent (4): Family is Carson and Mandy (the Cat)

### ***Placements on Scale***

#### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.50
Carson	2.50

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.50

#### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	4.00
Carson	1.00

This construct clearly illustrates the conflict between the mother and her son concerning the definition of their family. In discussions, as in their drawings, the son insists that his family includes his father and mother, while the mother strongly disagrees. She defines the family as including just her son and herself and wants Carson to accept this view. However, Carson adamantly refuses to see it her way, and in the final development of this construct he insisted that the submergent pole was himself and Maggie, the cat (and no mother). The mother gave in.

Personal scores on the scale clearly display the degree of conflict. Of the two poles, the mother said her view of the family would then be 4.00, and that she knew Chris's would be 1.00. Chris mirrored this in his scores. The degree of polarization indicates both the strength of this conflict as well as the lack of compromise within the family with regards to this construct. Whereas Carson acknowledges the existence of his dad in the family, the mother clearly denies it. This family cannot agree on its basic structure.

The son's insistence on having his father included in the family definition reveals his difficulty with the separation of his parents. The mother's contrary opinion shows her stance that Carson should accept the developments in the family and adjust his opinions accordingly. As a result of the opposition between Carson and his mother on this construct, the family score is situated solidly in the middle of the two poles (2.50).

### ***Badgley Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1): Evolving as a Family  
Submergent (4): Stability

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	3.00
Carson	1.50

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.25

##### ***Family Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	2.00
Carson	2.25

In this construct, it can be seen how the two individuals in this family disagree on another basic aspect. Overall, the family rates itself as being slightly on the side of being stable (2.25). Individually, however, there is a discrepancy. Personally, the mother thinks that Carson thinks the family is very stable/remaining the same (4.00), whereas Carson actually thinks that the family is evolving into something quite different (1.00).

Possible reasons for this inconsistency could be that Carson wishes to oppose his mother and provide a rebellious response because she seems to be unaware of how he really views the family, and because there has been a general lack of communication regarding the effects of the changes to the family in the recent past.

### ***Badgley Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Facing the Future with Fierce Determination  
Submergent (4): Overwhelmed, Sleep, Depression

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.50
Carson	3.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.75

##### ***Family's Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	3.00
Carson	2.50

This construct demonstrates the mother and son's relationship regarding the future and change. As a family, they situate themselves between the emergent and submergent poles -- just slightly on the side of being overwhelmed (2.75).

Individually, the mother is identified as seeing the family as being more towards overwhelmed (3.00) than is Carson, with her score closer to the top of the submergent pole. Carson's score is solidly in the middle. It is interesting that he personally places his mother at the top (4.00), indicating that he sees her as being very overwhelmed with regards to her view of the family. He views himself on the emergent side of the middle (2.00), indicating that he sees himself more on the side of facing the future with fierce determination. It appears Carson is doing better than his mother in this regard.

#### ***Badgley Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Happy, Fun, Sense of Humour

Submergent (4): Real Bad, Just About Crazy, Feelings Kept Inside.

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	3.00
Carson	2.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.50

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	3.00
Carson	2.00

Analysis of this construct reveals that the family has again placed themselves right in the middle of the poles of a construct (2.50). However, in this circumstance, their scores are not polarized; generally, they both have middle scores, with the exception of Carson believing his family to be strongly on the side of happy, fun, sense of humour (2.00). Aside from this, they see each other's view as moderately on the submergent side.

Personally, the mother and son disagree on the son's score, with the mother indicating (3.00) that she sees Carson more likely to categorize the family as real bad, just about crazy, with feelings kept inside, whereas Carson personally scores himself as believing that the family is happy and fun, with a sense of humour (1.00).

Overall, Carson's score puts him moderately on the emergent pole, while the mother's score puts her moderately on the submergent pole. Together, they are in the middle.

#### ***Badgley Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Conceptual, Holistic Thinking

Submergent (4): Linear Thinking, Deprivation, Still

#### ***Placement on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.50
Carson	2.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.50

##### ***Family Placements of Individuals:***

Mom	2.00
Carson	2.50

This construct is a moderate one, with both family members seeing themselves in the middle. With the exception of the mother's personal score for Carson's view (3.00), they are both scored at half way, slightly on the emergent side. This indicates that they generally view themselves as being conceptual, holistic thinkers. Carson's score, as averaged from the two of them, shows that his view of the family is more balanced than that of his mother's. The mother appears to project a lot -- especially on Carson.

#### ***Badgley Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): "Real" Family, Unique  
Submergent (4): "Strangers," Described by Society, Fragmented

#### ***Placements on Scale***

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.00
Carson	1.50

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 1.75

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	2.00
Carson	1.50

In this construct, the mother and son agree that they have a fairly strong view of their family as being real and unique (1.75), despite their differences in defining the parameters of whom to include in the family definition. The son's total is slightly stronger towards the emergent pole (1.50) than is the mother's (2.00), though both have situated themselves firmly on the emergent side. United on this construct, they are together as a family.

#### ***Badgley Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The Badgley's average family placement score across all six constructs shows that they view the family on the emergent side (2.33). However, on a few constructs, they approach the middle: for example, leaning towards the submergent pole to include the father in the family, and also a hint of feeling overwhelmed about the future. There will probably be ongoing conflicts in this regard. Other than that, they see themselves as happy, evolving, thinking conceptually, and being a unique family. Both mother and son have a strong sense of determination, and this will no doubt continue to affect the family's ongoing definition and structure.

#### ***6.2.8 The Samson Family***

The Samson family includes four members. They are Trevor, the father, aged 54; his wife Bev, aged 42; and their two daughters, Karey, aged 11, and Hedy, aged 9. The father works fulltime outside the home. The mother works part-time, and is considerably involved in activities related to her daughters. The two children attend a nearby school and are involved in several sports and artistic pursuits. The focus here is on the family unit. They were the only family in which all of the members asked to sign the participation consent form: usually only the parents sign. This is a second marriage for both parents, and the adult children from the father's previous marriage were not included in the research as they live elsewhere. This family, like many others, wanted to participate in the research so as to have a structured family activity.



### ***Samson Family Scribble Drawings***

The father drew a circle that dominated the page entitled "Pumpkin." The mother drew a firmly-lined, egg-shaped image and titled it, "Egg." Karey drew non-overlapping circles, and named it, "The Emazing Circle." Her sister, Hedy, drew many overlapping lines and titled her drawing, "The Swirling Tornado."

After the father's suggestion, the family chose Hedy's scribble as the one to jointly develop into a picture. All were actively involved, with the father directing the drawings, and providing structure and definitions. The completed drawing displayed a sled on top of a car, with many children in the back seat, and the mother driving. The children titled the drawing, "The Million Children on One Sled."

### ***Samson Family Drawings***

Hedy drew her family as smiling figures, each with a tennis racquet in their hands. Each individual was placed in a specific location, with the mother and father serving. Hedy elaborated on how her family is always participating in sports, and titled her drawing, "The Family of Tennis Fanatics." This activity theme became part of a later shared construct that the family developed. Karey drew an outdoor picture of horses. On each horse was a family member. She was not sure who was on the first horse. Karey also proudly elaborated on all the family activities, and titled her drawing, "Gidiup" (see Appendix D, Figure D6.8).

The mother's illustration depicted her family having a barbecue in their backyard. Each family member was drawn doing a particular activity, and the mother titled her drawing, "Summer Evening at Chez Samson's."

The father drew a portrait of his family at the beach. The drawing is shown in Figure 6.15.

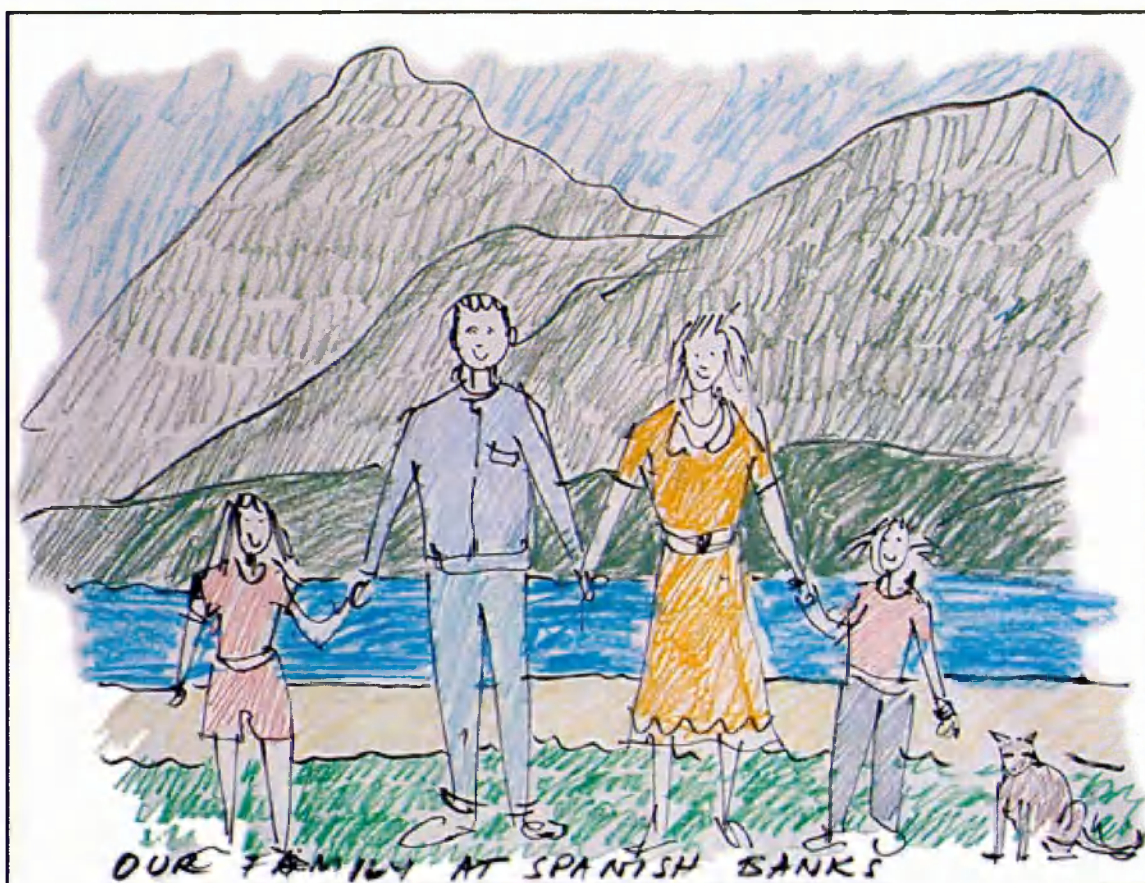


Figure 6.15. Sams on family: Family drawing by Father entitled "Our Family at Spanish Banks"

Note how clearly and precisely every person is presented. Note too, the near equality of size between both parents, as well as between both children. This essence of “perfection” was mirrored in a later family construct, which depicted the family as “formal, well-mannered and picture-perfect.” The father’s drawing was an early indication of this important aspect of the Samson family. He titled his picture, “Our Family at Spanish Banks.”

### ***Samson Family Construct Development***

An analysis of the family’s drawings and related behaviours indicates that the mother and father see the family as proud of themselves, interactive, being individuals as well as a close group, and as “picture perfect.” The children concur, although referring to the feminine, fanatic, competitive, and security aspects of the family.

The following emergent constructs were developed from the results of this analysis and became the basis for the family’s shared constructs: A Comfortable, Dedicated and Solid Family, Activity Oriented, Respecting Each Other’s Individuality, Formal, Well-mannered and Picture-perfect, Balanced, and Has Directed Passion.

### ***Samson Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The Samson family’s shared family constructs and discussions of related scale analysis results are presented below. To conserve space, personal scores are not listed, and explanations of scaling terms were presented on p. 124.

### ***Samson Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Formal, Well-mannered and Picture-perfect

Submergent (4): Interrupting, Forgetting, Eating Like Cows

### ***Placements on Scale***

#### ***Individual’s Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.25
Dad	1.50
Karey	2.50
Hedy	2.00

***Family’s Placement of Family:*** 1.81

#### ***Family’s Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.50
Dad	1.62
Karey	2.50
Hedy	1.62

On this construct, the family presents as being extremely formal, well mannered and picture-perfect, with the daughters on their best behaviour and greeting guests at the door (1.81). Personally, mother and father see the family at the top (1.00), and the family also sees their mother (1.50) and father (1.62) as viewing them high on the emergent side of this construct. However, personal scores of the children tend to show that they believe that family members do not really view the family as being perfect. The children score personal family views as sometimes being on the submergent side, except for the oldest daughter, Hedy, who scores herself at the top of the pole (1.00), indicating that she, like her parents, sees the family as being picture-perfect.



This aspect of the family is an important one to them. It is obvious that the parents work carefully with the daughters to help them maintain good manners and not to regress to such behaviours as interrupting, forgetting, and eating like cows. Still, the family places themselves strongly on the positive, emergent side. They evidently view themselves as fundamentally being that way. They are very tidy and organized and the well-kept house reflects this.

### ***Samson Family Construct #2***

Emergent (1):     Balanced

Submergent (4):   Unbalanced, When Mom and Dad are Balancing Each Other Because of Dad Being Absent or Forgiving, Accepting of Imbalance

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.25
Dad	1.25
Karey	2.75
Hedy	1.50

***Family's Placement of Family:***                     1.68

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.62
Dad	2.00
Karey	1.75
Hedy	1.37

This construct addresses the effect of the parent's jobs within the family, and in particular how they balance work and family life. The family was clear that they generally feel the father is working too hard and that he is sometimes distant and focussed on work. This was evident in their personal scores, but there is a collective view that the family is mostly balanced.

Karey, the youngest daughter, places the whole family's view slightly on the unbalanced side. She personally scores her father and herself with 3.00. Hedy, the eldest daughter, is the member portrayed as viewing the family as most balanced (1.37). Again, her view of the family is a positive one.

Balance is an important theme in this family, and it is apparent in the fact that the mother has chosen not to work fulltime so that she can be at home and ensure that the children have a balanced life.

### ***Samson Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1):     Directed Emotion/passion, Committed to Being a Family

Submergent (4):   Falling Apart a Bit, Dad Works Too Much

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Karey	1.00
Hedy	1.75

***Family's Placement of Family:***                     1.18

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	1.00
Karey	1.50
Hedy	1.25

Here, the family talks about their passionate nature and how they apply it in their lives. They identify it as an aspect of family commitment, and score themselves quite strongly on the emergent side (1.18). The submergent side, they indicated, is when father works too hard at work, and does not have any energy to put into his commitment to the family.

All of the members of the family identify themselves in this construct in a clearly emergent way. Both parents are clear that they direct their passion into their family life and are able to maintain a solid commitment to the family. Hedy scores Karey (3.00) and herself (2.00) slightly higher. This, she explained, is because she believes (and she thinks that Karey agrees) that their father works too hard right now, and that they would like to spend more time with him. She identifies the family as struggling a bit, with her dad being negatively affected by working too much.

***Samson Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Affectionate  
Submergent (4): Hard to Show Feelings

*Placements on Scale*

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.25
Dad	1.25
Karey	2.37
Hedy	1.75

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.65

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.25
Dad	2.00
Karey	1.87
Hedy	1.87

In this construct, the family addresses their demonstration and expression of emotions, in particular, that of affection. It is seen that Karey's rating of the family is the highest (2.37), yet it is still within the emergent range. This indicates that the family agrees that they are generally affectionate, but that Karey's view of the family is that while they are affectionate, they still have difficulty expressing feelings. Overall, their score is well on the emergent side (1.65). Regarding the father, however, both girls seem to feel that he believes the family has difficulty showing their feelings as they have personally scored him rather highly (3.00) on the submergent side.

***Samson Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Comfortable, Dedicated and Solid Family  
Submergent (4): Uncomfortable, Grumpy and Conflicting

### Placements on Scale

#### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.50
Dad	1.50
Karey	2.00
Hedy	1.25

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.56

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.62
Dad	1.62
Karey	1.75
Hedy	1.25

Here again, the family places themselves quite solidly on the emergent side of this construct, which deals with another aspect of their family. They score themselves in a way that indicates that they view the family as quite comfortable, dedicated and solid (1.56).

Karey rates the family most strongly towards uncomfortable, grumpy and conflicting (2.00), and Hedy personally rates her mother in the same way. Hedy scores everyone else at the top of the emergent pole. This family values and identifies with security and dedication.

### ***Samson Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): Activity Oriented  
Submergent (4): Exhausted, Worn Out

### Placements on Scale

#### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.25
Dad	1.00
Karey	2.37
Hedy	1.25

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.46

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.25
Dad	1.50
Karey	1.75
Hedy	1.37

This analysis addresses the family's overwhelming value of activity. The father most strongly sees his family as activity oriented, scoring the family at the top of the emergent scale (1.00). Karey also views the family as activity oriented, but she places her family score closer to the emergent side (2.37), a little over the middle, suggesting that it is exhausted and worn out. She has personally scored her father's view highly (3.00), explaining that because he works so hard, he is too tired to do anything and when he gets home he feels the family is also too tired.

Hedy's (1.25) and her mother's (1.75) views were both scored higher towards the emergent pole, also both scored their family most towards that side. This demonstrates, as with other constructs in this family, that Hedy and her mother will generally view things in a similar way and resemble one another in some ways.

This family is a very dedicated and busy one, and it is interesting that their last construct was about being exhausted.

#### ***Samson Family Scale Analysis Summary***

The Samson's mean score was clearly on the emergent side (1.56), with responses indicating that they feel they are an affectionate, active, directed, balanced, and dedicated family that is formal, well mannered and picture-perfect. It is clear that the parents are committed to raising their children in this manner, something they say they agreed upon before entering into their present marriage.

#### ***6.2.9 The Langdon Family***

This nuclear family consists of a father and mother and their three children. The father, Aaron, is aged 51, and his wife Nadia is aged 57. Cam, the only son, is aged 18, his sister Linda is aged 16, and the youngest sister, Nancy is aged 10. The family has recently moved to this city from another part of the country. At present, the father is at home with the mother, finalizing business dealings from their previous hometown. Already, there is a sense of the family being integrated into the new community: the son attends a private school apart from that of his sisters, and the mother is actively involved in her children's school and other interests. The son's disruptive behaviour, both at home and at school, is of particular concern. In this family, there is an emphasis on getting along and on maintaining some measure of equilibrium. The mother had asked to have her family participate in the research activities with the hope that it would provide all of the members with a chance to communicate amongst themselves.

#### ***Langdon Family Scribble Drawings***

Both parents individually drew lightly pencilled circles on each of their papers, with the father titling his, "Modern Art," and the mother naming her vertical snail-like drawing, "Spiral." The son, Cam, drew a snail-like scribble across his paper, and named his picture, "Spirals." Linda drew a large circle in the middle of her page, and titled it, "The Milky Way." The youngest daughter, Nancy, drew a circle, with some straight lines in it and called her drawing, "The Circle."

Cam said that the family should choose the father's scribble as the one to develop into a joint family picture. All agreed and became involved in drawing a tree, with the daughters drawing presents under the branches. However, it was the son who took over most of the drawing, adding colourful decorations all over the paper. He also took the initiative in titling the picture, "The French Christmas Tree," and signed it, "The Langdon Family."

#### ***Langdon Family Drawings***

The family members then drew representations of their family. The mother drew lightly pencilled oval circles, horizontally and vertically criss-crossing each other. Inside of the circles she drew expressionless stick figures, which represented family members. She was at the top, and the father was at the bottom. The children were in the middle, thus separating the parents. The mother drew dotted, red lines to outline the "strife relationships" within the family. There were many of them, but not one that portrayed the mother-father relationship as such. The mother initially titled her drawing, "Nadia, the U.N. Peacekeeper," but she later changed it to read, "Nadia, the Unsuccessful Peacekeeper." She appeared saddened by the reflections of her

drawing. Aspects of this drawing surfaced later in the family's shared constructs such as Angry/arguing and Experiencing Rift.

To depict his family, the father drew a column of two vertically placed boxes, one above the other, and placed a family member's name and beehive descriptor in each one of them. He did the same with three horizontally placed boxes across the bottom. Lines join all of the boxes. As presented in Figure 6.21 the titled his drawing, "The Langdon's Family Structure." In the top box he placed the mother, with the title "Queen Director." The father was in the middle as, "Worker Manager," and the three children were across the bottom as, "Drones." There are no colours on the paper. The father explained that although this was a good structure, the beehive could not work very well because there was mutiny in the drones. The mother offered that this was because she was not a good director. This theme of hierarchies was evident in another family construct: that of Hierarchical and Controlled. Suppressed tension appeared to be surfacing in this family.

The son's representation of his family also illustrated feelings of a family hierarchy. He titled it, "The Lost Family." Cam's drawing is presented in Figure 6.16 and as he declared, "It says it all." Note that he has placed himself at the top, and his mother and father at the bottom. The essence of this picture relates to many of the family's shared constructs, one of which is, "Concerned about Cam."



Figure 6.16. Langdon family: Family drawing by Cam entitled "The Lost Family"

Both of the daughter's family representations dealt with individualism in the family. Linda, the eldest daughter, drew a picture that had separate compartments to it. At the top, on one side she drew her sister watching television. At the bottom, she drew herself reading. In the middle, she drew her mother and father, side-by-side, happily clinking wine glasses together. On the furthest side, she drew her brother in a car, exiting the picture. There are smiles on everyone's face except Cam's. Linda titled her drawing, "Our Family Time."

As her representation, Nancy drew five circles, which she developed into faces of her family members. Each face has a name and a symbol to represent an associated interest or activity. Four of the faces have smiles on them, and are placed on the extreme left. Cam's unsmiling face is placed alone, on the extreme right. Nancy explained that Cam does not involve himself with the family. She titled her drawing, "The Langdon's." These themes of separation and individualism were later reflected in the family construct, Secret/private/needing Space.

### ***Langdon Family Construct Development***

An analysis of the family's drawings and related behaviours revealed that the family views itself in many different ways. In summary, the parents view it as private, experiencing unhappiness amongst the children, working better in small groups, having poor communication, protected by both of them, and led by the mother. The daughters see the family as individual and divided, affected negatively by the brother, allowing violence, needing direction, having a forgiving and lenient mother, and as having a mother and father that are together. The son views it as lost, colourful, hierarchical, bothering and against him. There is a sense of unidentified pain in the family.

Results of this analysis produced the following ten emergent constructs for development by the Langdon family members: Secret and Private, Needs a Lot of Space, Protected and Forgiving, Angry and Arguing, Ineffective Communication, In Peril, Not Unified on Family Goals, Has a Sense of Humour, Hierarchical and Controlled, Focussed on Cam, Financially Comfortable, and Upholding a Standard.

### ***Langdon Family Scale Analysis of Shared Family Constructs***

The following shows the developed set of the Langdon family's shared family constructs and a discussion relating to the results of each scale analysis. Personal scale scores are not listed, and explanations of scaling terms were presented on p. 124.

### ***Langdon Family Construct #1***

Emergent (1): Hierarchical and Controlled  
Submergent (4): Family Not Together

### **Placements on Scale**

#### ***Individual Placements of Family:***

Mom	3.00
Dad	3.00
Nancy	2.20
Linda	1.40
Cam	3.40

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.44

#### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.00
Dad	2.60
Nancy	2.40
Linda	3.00
Cam	2.20

This construct describes how the family views leadership in the family, with the collective score being close to the middle (2.44). The individual placement shows that the eldest daughter, Linda, sees the family the most toward the emergent construct of hierarchical and controlled (1.40), whereas the family's score indicates that she feels the family is higher on the submergent side of not being together (3.00).

Cam, however, scores even higher towards the submergent pole in his placement of the family (3.4). He identified everyone in the family as viewing them more apart than he does.

Another interesting aspect related to the mother's submergent view of the family (3.00), is that both of the daughters in the family personally gave their mother a top emergent score (1.00), indicating that they believe she sees the family as very hierarchical and controlled (and voicing that she is the controller). However, Cam, the mother, and the father all score mother at the top of the submergent pole (4.00) -- indicating that they all believe that the mother feels strongly that the family is not together.

The mother is clearly identified by all of the members of the family as being the "queen bee," head of the house, and the controller. Thus, it is noteworthy that the children would have such differing views of how their mother may see their family. There are discrepancies in this family as to how members are viewed, and to how they actually feel. One contributing factor may be that of inadequate communication amongst them. This was suggested in one of the daughter's drawings of the family, where she depicted each sibling being alone in their separate rooms.

#### *Langdon Family Construct #2*

Emergent (1): Concerned About Cam  
Submergent (4): More Positive, Easy Family Life

#### Placements on Scale

##### *Individual Placements of Family:*

Mom	1.60
Dad	1.40
Nancy	1.80
Linda	1.90
Cam	1.20

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.58

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.40
Dad	1.80
Nancy	1.40
Linda	1.40
Cam	1.80

Here we are looking at how Cam's trouble -- both in and out of the family and especially his fighting with his older sister -- affects the whole family. The family's total score indicates that they are slightly on the emergent side, seeing the family as being concerned about Cam (2.44).

The analysis presents a fairly clear view of Cam's feelings on this construct. He feels that the family is more concerned about him than they identify. He has given himself a high emergent score. His personal scores of all of the family members indicate that he believes that they are very strongly concerned about him, but for himself, he identifies moderate concern (2.00). This is consistent with the image that he drew, and with his comments that he believes much attention is on him, and that he should not have to explain himself.

Personally, the mother, the father, and Cam score both girls as viewing the family as very strongly concerned about Cam, with scores close to the top of the emergent pole. The girls, however, score themselves more closely to the middle, indicating moderate concern. Linda and the father both believe that Cam sees the family as very much concerned about him. Nancy and Cam both think that the parents are very concerned (1.00), whereas Linda thinks that the mother is quite concerned (1.50). However, she scores the father higher (3.00), indicating her belief that he views the family significantly more on the side of having a positive, easy life. This is in agreement with comments noted, which indicated that the family perceives the father as less actively involved as a parent, and somewhat emotionally removed.

The crux of all of this is that on both the individual placements and the family's placements, the mother, the father, and Cam individually see the family as more concerned about Cam than do the daughters. Conversely, the two girls see the family collectively as less concerned than the mother, the father, or Cam.

Both males score close to the middle of their family placements on the scale (1.80). This means that the family perceives them as less concerned about Cam, though still about halfway on the emergent side. This may be a question of gender, in that both males believe that the family is more concerned; but individually, they are less concerned for Cam than are the females.

### ***Langdon Family Construct #3***

Emergent (1): Protected/forgiving  
Submergent (4): Lost, Miserable

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	1.80
Dad	1.80
Nancy	2.00
Linda	2.10
Cam	2.00

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 1.94

##### ***Family's Placement of Individuals:***

Mom	1.40
Dad	1.60
Nancy	1.60
Linda	2.30
Cam	2.80



In this construct, the family clearly identifies that they believe Cam sees the family as mostly lost and miserable. Their score is close to the centre but on the submergent side of the construct. Close to Cam's score, but on the emergent side, is Linda's score (2.30). Cam and Linda are given higher scores by the family, which suggests that the conflict and anger between them has led the family to believe that they view the family towards lost and miserable.

Overall, the family places themselves on the emergent side (1.94), which implies fairly strongly that the family perception is primarily that of protected and forgiving.

The mother and father are scored more towards protected and forgiving, and they scored the family towards that pole as well. They also indicated that their placement of the family on the scale (1.80) is more towards protected and forgiving than are their children's, and their children see the family that way also.

#### ***Langdon Family Construct #4***

Emergent (1): Secret/private/needing Space

Submergent (4): Agitated, Babbling, Loud

#### **Placements on Scale**

Individual's Placement of Family:

Mom	1.40
Dad	2.00
Nancy	2.80
Linda	2.40
Cam	2.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.12

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.00
Dad	1.20
Nancy	2.40
Linda	2.40
Cam	2.60

Here is a construct that addresses the family's reactions and responses to problems and conflicts in the family. Collectively, the family sees itself as being on the emergent side (2.12), but somewhat in the middle of being secret/absent and being there and loud.

Cam is perceived personally by all family members as viewing the family on the side of agitated, babbling, and loud (3.00), except for the mother, who thinks Cam thinks it is more private. Nancy scores the family more on the side of agitated, babbling and loud (2.80). The mother scores the family most towards secret/private/needing space (1.40), and the father is also strongly placed on this side (1.20).

This supports the information given that father prefers to withdraw and keep to himself, especially regarding emotional conflict. This also relates to the voiced concern about emotions in the family. In this family, members struggle to know how to handle the anger and violence in the family, and to maintain their privacy in the midst of difficult circumstances. Denying the anger and violence and keeping it to themselves is the way that the father prefers, and this is one form of role modeling to which the children have been exposed.

### ***Langdon Family Construct #5***

Emergent (1): Angry/arguing  
Submergent (4): Having Fun

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.50
Dad	2.40
Nancy	1.90
Linda	1.40
Cam	1.80

***Family's Placement of Family:*** 2.08

##### ***Family's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.00
Dad	2.00
Nancy	2.50
Linda	2.20
Cam	1.70

This construct clearly addresses a particular problem that the family brought to the research project: they wanted support to deal with fighting and conflict.

Linda places the family most on the side of angry and arguing (1.40), and all three children have placed the family strongly on this pole as well. All of the scores in this construct are on the emergent side, with the average being 2.12: a confirmation of the anger and conflict experienced by this family.

Nancy scores the family fairly centrally, implying that she views it as balancing anger and arguing with fun, and that the entire family feels that she has a stronger sense of the family as "fun." Linda and Cam pointed out that this is in part because she is the little sister and is protected, spending the most time of all the siblings doing special things with her parents.

The family perceives that Cam sees them as angry and arguing (1.70). The children all view him firmly on that side of the construct. His mother has taken a neutral position across the board for everyone, and the father personally scored Cam the highest of all the family towards having fun, with a score on the submergent side (3.00). His parents insist on not identifying Cam too strongly as the problem. They are also reserved about acknowledging that there is even a problem with anger and arguing within the family.

Both parents place the family neutrally, with the mother's score across the board indicating her resistance at this time to outwardly acknowledge problems within the family. This is certainly not the case in private, where the mother has actively sought professional help for family members. This again suggests that there is some secret or event disturbing this family.

### ***Langdon Family Construct #6***

Emergent (1): Ineffective Communication  
Submergent (4): Everyone Understanding Each Other

#### **Placements on Scale**

##### ***Individual's Placement of Family:***

Mom	2.40
Dad	2.30
Nancy	1.90
Linda	2.30
Cam	2.20

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.30

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.20
Dad	2.30
Nancy	1.90
Linda	2.30
Cam	3.20

This analysis is about the family's communication style. The family situates itself quite centrally on this construct, just marginally on the side of ineffective communication (2.30). As noted from conversations, generally this family feels that they say what they need to say and understand one another, but it is often said in anger and in a manner that is not very effective.

Cam scores himself personally at the top of the submergent scale (4.00), indicating that he believes everyone in the family understands one another. The family concurs that this is his view (2.80). The mother again takes a neutral stance, only varying marginally to personally put her score for Cam's view of the family slightly on the side of ineffective communication (2.00). The father counters by giving Cam a higher score (3.00), suggesting that he thinks Cam views the family more on the side of understanding one another. The father gives himself a strong score on the emergent pole (1.00), thereby revealing that he feels the family is extremely ineffective in their communication.

#### ***Langdon Family Construct #7***

Emergent (1): Experiencing Rifts, Not Unified on Goals

Submergent (4): Being Like the Brady Bunch

#### **Placements on Scale**

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.80
Dad	2.20
Nancy	2.00
Linda	2.60
Cam	2.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.20

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.60
Dad	2.20
Nancy	2.00
Linda	2.60
Cam	2.00

Again, the family discusses another aspect of the dissonance they experience. In this construct it is the youngest family member, Nancy, who is viewed by the family as seeing it on the brighter side. She is placed

strongly towards the submergent pole (3.40), thinking the family is like the Brady Bunch: a perfect television family. This indicates that the family believes that she has quite an innocent view and that she is outside some of the conflicts and rifts that the rest of them experience. Nancy herself disagrees. She scores her own placement of the family nearer to the rift side (2.00), and scores her family that way as well. In fact, she gives her mother a higher score than herself (3.00), indicating that she thinks her mother has more of a Brady Bunch view of the family. Linda scores her family highest towards the submergent pole (2.60), but personally scores it on the emergent side of the construct. This suggests that she sees the family as experiencing rifts, and not unified. The mother follows closely with her placement of the family also on the emergent side (1.80).

Interestingly, Cam, who is identified as a key part of the conflicts in the family, has been scored rather centrally (2.40). Cam and his father have scored the family very similarly in this construct, as in other places. So, do they have congruent views, or do they influence one another in some way?

#### ***Langdon Family Construct #8***

Emergent (1): Sense of Humour  
Submergent (4): A Lot of Trouble

##### *Placements on Scale*

##### *Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	2.80
Dad	2.60
Nancy	2.10
Linda	2.00
Cam	3.00

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.50

##### *Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	2.80
Dad	2.60
Nancy	2.10
Linda	2.00
Cam	3.00

This construct is scored centrally by the family (2.50), which means that they see themselves as occasionally funny, and occasionally in a lot of trouble. This is an accurate family perception. Individually, Nancy seems to view the family mostly on the side of humour, although her score is still quite central (2.10). The same applies to Linda's view. However, Cam and his mother both believe that Linda sees the family as extremely on the side of trouble (4.00). This refers to the difficulty that Linda has had with her brother's violence towards her and her sister, a situation that Linda clearly found very unsettling. Cam scored the family on the submergent side (3.00). His score was the highest on this pole: he definitely sees the family as being in a lot of trouble.

#### ***Langdon Family Construct #9***

Emergent (1): Financially Comfortable  
Submergent (4): Not Enough

##### *Placements on Scale*

*Individual' Placements of Family:*

Mom	1.00
Dad	2.20
Nancy	2.00
Linda	1.20
Cam	2.20

*Family's Placement of Family:* 1.72

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.70
Dad	1.50
Nancy	2.00
Linda	1.20
Cam	2.20

An analysis of this construct about the family's financial situation reveals that although the males identify the family on the emergent side of being financially comfortable, their score leans more towards the submergent side. Cam personally indicates that he views the family as extremely comfortable (1.00). Nancy sees things differently; suggesting that Cam feels the family does not have enough (4.00). Nancy may be more aware of Cam's constant demands for more money, whereas she feels quite comfortable with what she receives. However, the family's total score is on the emergent side (1.72), indicating that they feel their family is financially comfortable.

Again the mother has presented a strong message with her score, giving all of the family members a top emergent score (1.00), saying that they all feel strongly that the family is financially comfortable. Is this truly her impression of how she thinks the members of the family view their situation, or is this the message she wants to portray: that she has financially provided for her family very well, and that this is how she wants her family to be viewed? It is a question of power on the mother's part, as well as hierarchy. The family's view of their financial situation is also due to the way the children are raised: for example, promising the son a luxury sports car upon his high school graduation.

***Langdon Family Construct #10***

Emergent (1): Upholding a Standard

Submergent (4): Not Doing It

*Placements on Scale*

*Individual's Placement of Family:*

Mom	1.80
Dad	2.00
Nancy	2.40
Linda	1.80
Cam	2.80

*Family's Placement of Family:* 2.16

*Family's Placement of Individuals:*

Mom	1.80
Dad	1.80
Nancy	2.70

Linda	2.70
Cam	1.80

In this construct, we see how the family situates itself with regards to its standards. Overall, it is slightly on the submergent side (2.16). Linda and mother have scored the family mainly towards the emergent side (1.80), indicating that they both see the family as upholding a standard; yet Cam strongly situates the family towards the submergent pole (2.80).

The mother, father, and Cam all have family placement totals nearer the submergent side (1.80), while the girls have scores that are slightly lower. This suggests that the family views Nancy and Linda as not upholding a standard in terms of appearances, supported by the mother's observation that Linda was swearing loudly outside of the home, and not valuing the family's reputation. The mother also scores Cam and the father slightly on the emergent side, indicating that she perceives them to only marginally view the family as upholding the standard.

#### ***Langdon Family Scale Analysis Summary***

As the mean shows (1.95), family placement scores on these constructs were all on the emergent side. The only construct that was more central was that of Hierarchical and Controlled, suggesting that the view was close to that of Family Not Being Together. This family therefore sees the constructs most obvious and available to them at this time as being Angry and Arguing, Ineffective Communication, Not Unified on Their Goals, Protected and Forgiving, Financially Comfortable, Having a Sense of Humour, Upholding a Standard, and Concerned About the Only Son.

Throughout their construct development, the Langdon's struggled to put meaning to themselves, with many arguments about where they really stood, and strong pronouncements that they want things to be better. They are a dynamic group, including opinionated children and a mother who is determined to have peace in her family.

This section of the chapter has presented the results and discussion of the within-family analysis. The following section focuses on the across-families analysis.

### **6.3 Across-Families Analysis: Results of All Families**

#### **6.3.1 Shared Family Construct Scale Analysis**

An analysis of each family's mean score across their family placements of shared family constructs was undertaken in order to ascertain where the family members, as a group, viewed themselves in relation to either the emergent or submergent pole of each of their shared constructs. These results were discussed earlier in the within-family analysis.

An across-families analysis of mean scale scores on family placements of shared family constructs was then completed. Table C6.1 (see Appendix C) shows that the mean score was on the emergent side, indicating that was where the families mainly placed themselves on their shared family constructs. This suggests that the average family saw themselves as perceiving and acting upon the more obvious and available construct (the emergent one) and that the submergent one would be operative only when the emergent one was not appropriate. Kelly (1955b) proposed that individuals would most often choose the emergent pole as the one to guide their actions, as it would be the one that appeared to better suit their thoughts at the moment (p. 1048). Dallos (1991) and Procter (1996) found this to be usual in families, and the current research supports this conclusion.

#### **6.3.2 Shared Family Construct Theme Analysis**

A phenomenological analysis of ten families was undertaken in order to identify themes within each family and those common across all families. The analysis began by investigating in detail one family's shared constructs and their emerging themes. These themes became the basis for a more exploratory analysis in which the focus became the study of shared themes across all ten families. The first family's data, analysis, and results were presented and discussed in an earlier section.

#### **6.3.3 General Family Themes**

The across-families thematic analysis, which was based on the initial family's analysis, resulted in several general themes. These were then subsumed into fewer, distinct units: each one having its own unique set of similarities regarding concept, richness and frequency. Each unit was then assigned a new, comprehensive title, and became a major theme. Results of the across-families' thematic analysis are shown in Table 6.1, which presents 22 general family themes, and the 5 major family themes that emerged from them for the ten families. Also shown in this table are figure notations, which indicate where representative drawings of some of the general themes can be found in Appendices B and D. A selected group of drawings portraying the major themes are included in this chapter.

#### **6.3.4 Major Family Themes**

Five major family themes emerged from the 22 general family themes. These themes were the result of an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, 1996), which in this study analysed each family's shared family constructs. The rationale/method of this analysis was explained in Chapters IV and V. Results showed that across families, shared family constructs were related to the major family themes of Connection to Family of Origin, Family Values, Family Structure, Family's Everyday Concerns, and Management of Change. Percentages of the major family themes in the first family to be analyzed were shown in Section 6.1.2, and the percentages for each of the remaining nine families are shown in Figures E6.1-E6.9 (see Appendix E). Figure 6.17 shows the percentages of major family themes across all ten families.

Table 6.1. *General and Major Family Themes Across-families*

General Themes	Major Themes
Family Pride ( <i>Fig. D6.2</i> )	Connection to Family of Origin
Family Definition ( <i>Fig. D6.7</i> )	Family Values
Family Commitment	Family Structure
Traditional Values	Family's Everyday Concerns
Family and Community	Management of Change
Wanting Normalcy	
Authority, Leadership, Family Structure	
Parental Hierarchy	
Power ( <i>Fig. D6.6</i> )	
Individual vs. Family Orientation ( <i>Fig. D6.5</i> )	
Worries re Children's Development	
Emotions ( <i>Fig. B6.1</i> )	
Gender ( <i>Fig. D6.3</i> )	
Past Trauma Indicated in Current Situation ( <i>Fig. D6.4</i> )	
Concerns of Present Family ( <i>Fig. B6.2</i> )	
Activity Orientation ( <i>Fig. D6.8</i> )	
Acceptance Expectation	
Change ( <i>Fig. D6.1</i> )	
Past, Present and Future	
Situation of Family in Time	
Concerns of the Future	
Connection to Family of Origin	

*Note: Figure notations indicate Appendices where representative drawings are shown.*

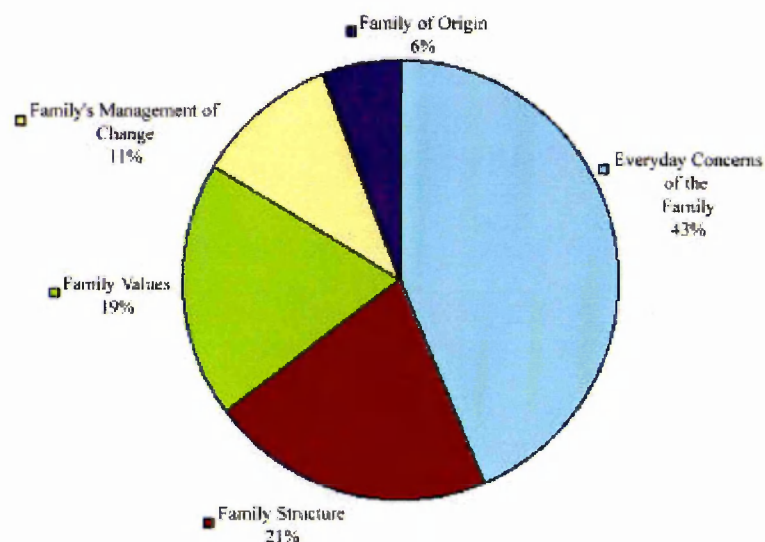


Figure 6.17. Percentages of major family themes across families



Although all themes were related to each other, each major family theme had issues and polarities within it. The polarities appeared to reflect conflicts within each theme, indicating that as family members strove to uphold basic concepts, they also found themselves introducing new ideas and behaviours. The push and pull was constant. These dynamics of change were evidenced in the original shared constructs of each family, and were therefore intrinsic in each theme: demonstrating that a family's sense of reality was ever changing. In Figure 6.18, the large, yellow boxes identify the major family themes. The smaller boxes, connected to specific themes with thin, pointed, black lines, identify the issues/polarities within those themes. The bold, black lines joining the yellow boxes from top to bottom indicate that all the themes are linked together in that they are represented within the families in this study.

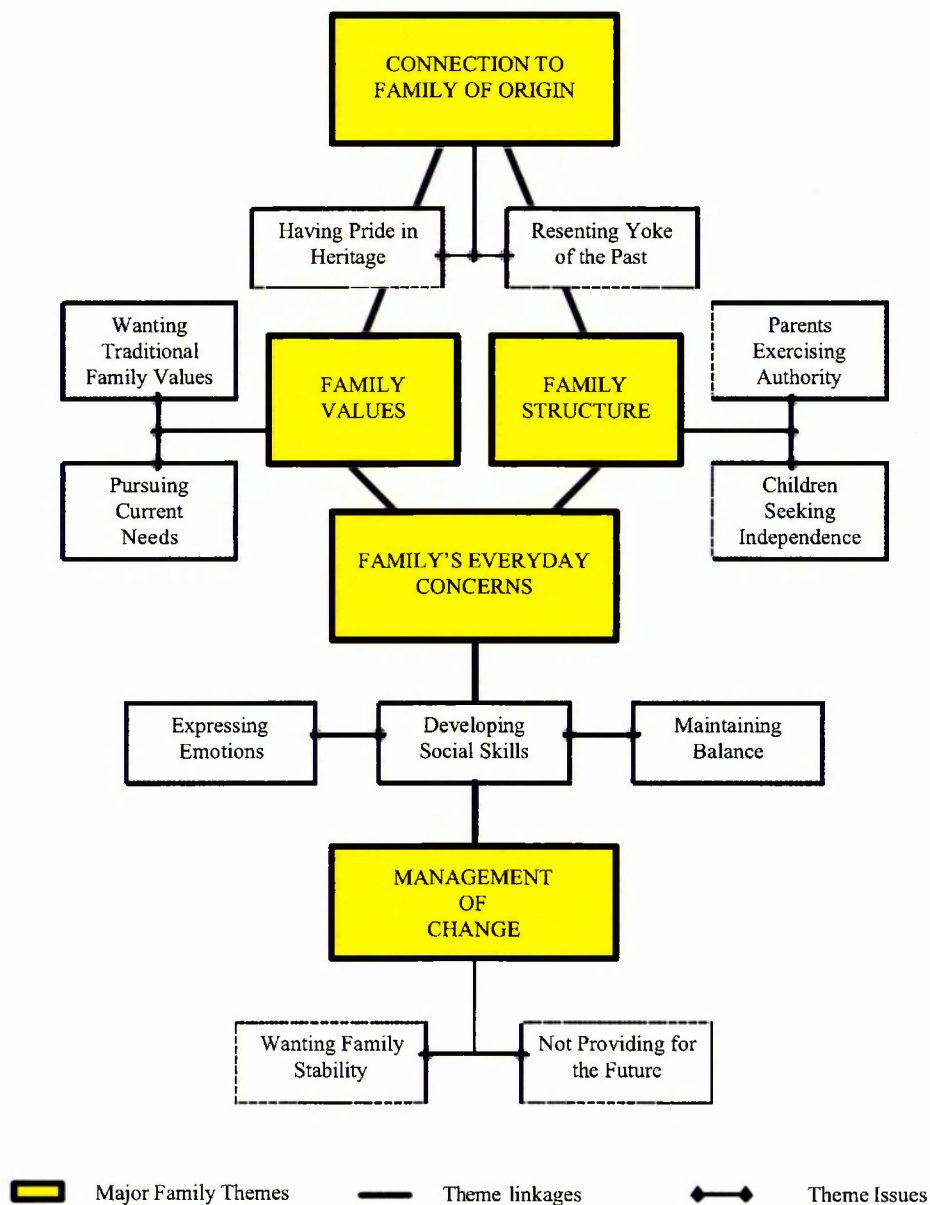


Figure 6.18. Relationships between major family themes and associated issues

#### 6.4 Theme Analysis: Representative Extracts and Illustrations

In this section of the analysis, the major family themes are highlighted. In order to further illustrate the nature of the themes, related drawings and samples of shared family constructs (as fully shown for each family in Chapter V) are presented. Sample constructs are referred to as “extracts” and for each one, an accompanying family name and number references the original development of the construct.

The first major theme, Connection to Family of Origin, is the underlying theme across all ten families. This is what participants in this research gave as their meaning of family: to be connected in an intense way to those to whom you are related. All other themes build on this one. Whether it is a family’s values, structure, everyday concerns, or change: everything is inextricably related to its roots.

##### 6.4.1 Connection to Family of Origin

Figure 6.19 is indicative of this major family theme and shows the young Ball daughter’s representation of her current family. She has titled and spelled it as, “The Big Familix.” Note that the extended family members of Papa, Auntie, and Grandma are included. Also note the omission of the mother, who was at times perceived by the family as being less important than the maternal grandmother.

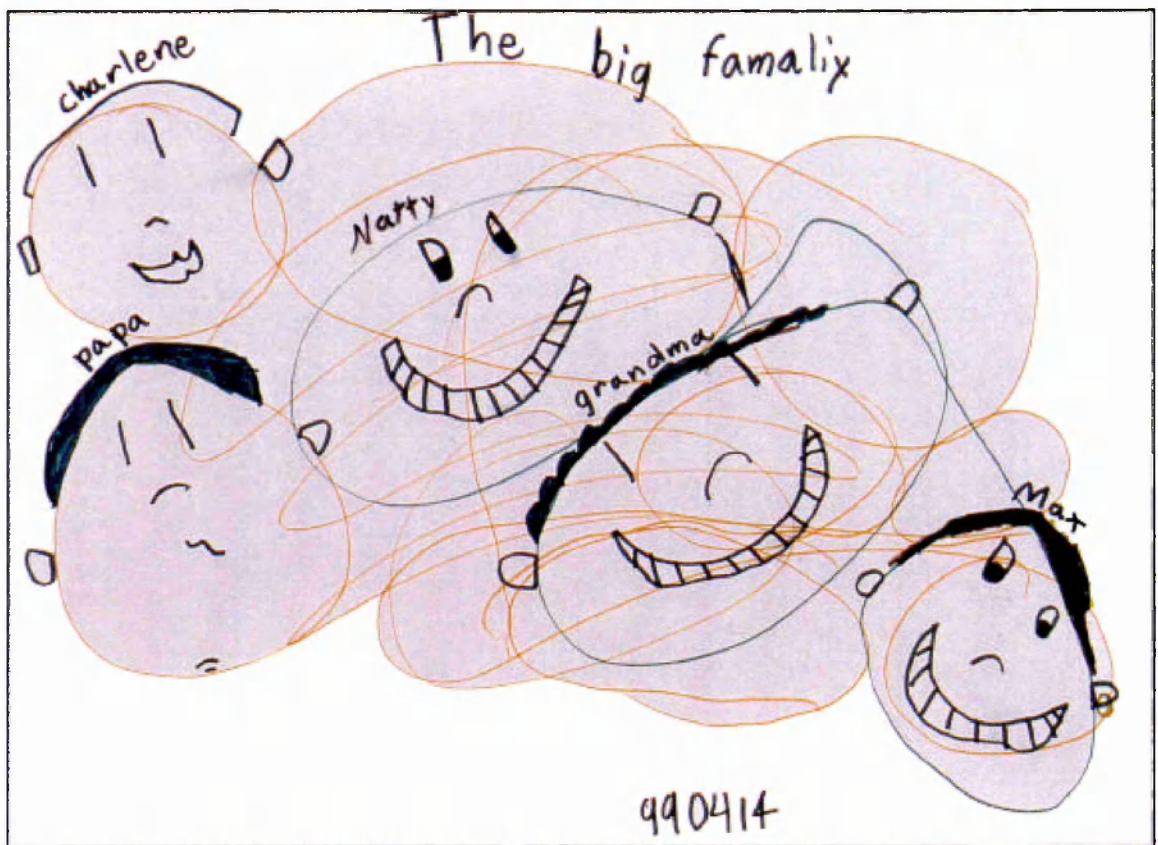


Figure 6.19. Ball family: Family drawing by Charlene entitled “The Big Familix”

Participants had strong feelings about connections to their biological families. These feelings were usually at either pole and seldom in the middle. Feelings appeared to originate in family members’ perceptions that although they desperately wanted to be a unique, new family, they were unable to stop doing things that were

reminiscent of their family of origin. Examples included neglect, abuse, and infidelity, and were perceived as being threats to the success of their present family. Even the children in these families had heard the stories and were aware that the negative past was not to be repeated. This is apparent in the following Extract 1, where the Thompson's shared family construct indicates that the family feels it is standing still if it has these negative aspects to it. Although this family perceived itself as being more oriented towards the future, it felt fearful when past, negative behaviours arose amongst them.

Extract 1 (Thompson Family Construct #2)  
Emergent: Future Oriented – It's the Only Way Out  
Submergent: Motionless, Repeating Mistakes from the Past

Participants were also aware of their connections to their family of origin in that they counted on them for help. This, too, was a double-sided situation. Although they perceived their extended family as being trustworthy and appreciated their help, they also felt obligated towards them. This would then lead to feelings of guilt or resentment, which would later emerge as anger despite the initial appreciation. The following construct, Extract 2, represents a perception that the Rosen family had in this regard. The mother in the family had recently died and the father found he was relying in many ways on his aged mother to keep the family together emotionally. This was a situation that caused him many emotions, including guilt and anger because his mother really was not physically able to do it. He also had some anger towards another adult family member whom he felt was more able but not as helpful.

Extract 2 (Rosen Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: Connected to Extended Family for Support  
Submergent: Anger at Them

Problems could still arise for family members when they received too much assistance from their family of origin. In one family, the dilemma was that the helpful grandparent represented a past that was not wanted by the current single mother. Yet without the grandparent, the mother felt her children would lose out on the love and sense of family togetherness that the grandparent's involvement offered. A scale analysis of the family construct shown in Extract 3 indicated that the Ball family managed to agree on a middle ground in this dilemma, even though the poles were extremely different.

Extract 3 (Ball Family Construct #2)  
Emergent: Grandma Tasha Too Present  
Submergent: Family Wouldn't Be Together

When perceptions of a family of origin were mostly unpleasant, this could cause a re-evaluation of the necessary connections to it. In the Ball family, the question was whether to define the family according to genetic bond or other types of support systems. The latter could allow distancing between the family and its origins, which were restrictive and abusive. This dilemma is shown in Extract 4, the scale analysis of which indicated that the family leaned mostly towards the emergent pole of the family construct, thus perceiving that their support system was mainly family. This then paved the way for the mother to develop a new family structure -- one that could include same-sex partners as parents -- within which to raise her children. This model was more suited to her current belief system and allowed her a valued sense of independence. However, one of the younger children felt strongly that the family of origin was still her "real" family.

Extract 4 (Ball Family Construct #1)

Emergent: Support System as Family  
Submergent: "Blood Family"

By contrast, when a family felt proud of its origins, there was a sense of having to live up to its reputation. If both current and extended families lived close to each other, the situation was easier than when families were geographically separated. In two of the families, the latter was the case. There were strong feelings of connection, but a sense of guilt in becoming lax in their ways of carrying on family traditions and practices. This could result in reduced feelings of happiness and self-esteem, both from an individual and family point of view. This is indicated in Extract 5, where a Gibson family construct is made up of feeling together when they have the interests and behaviours of their family of origin at heart, or feeling negative about one another when they are not emotionally connected towards their family of origin, or not acting in ways consistent with its beliefs.

Extract 5 (Gibson Family Construct #1)  
Emergent: Together, Isolated From Extended Family  
Submergent: Disrespectful of Each Other

These positive connections to the family of origin also extended into positive feelings towards their country of origin. Their perception was that it is very important to be proud of one's origins and that individual and family behaviours would be indicative of this. In one family, the clothing worn was traditional, and the parents saw this as a potential problem for their adolescent children who might want to conform to the dress of the country in which they were presently living. Both parents had spent their university-student years in a foreign country and had kept the ideals and practices of their origins. They were now determined to have their own children do the same. The Gibson family construct in Extract 6 shows the significance that can be placed on the importance of origins.

Extract 6 (Gibson Family Construct #2)  
Emergent: Culturally Proud  
Submergent: Disappointed at Lack of Practice of Their Religion

Most families had shared constructs that related to their family of origin. These constructs dealt with appreciating the familiarity and security of the past, but feeling inexplicably tied and wanting independence to suit their new lives. They experienced many frustrations as they tried to meld the old with the new. This basic theme, with its strong emotions and conflicts continued to pervade all other themes and influenced the perceptions of every aspect of a family's life.

#### **6.4.2 Family Values**

This theme was an important one across families. Many values were related to a family of origin, and members were constantly in the process of questioning or changing these influences. Values were a source of strong feelings within a family.

Figure 6.20 is a daughter's depiction of her family. This is the Gibson family (of Middle Eastern origin) in which family and cultural values are intertwined. Note how the flag serves this duality. She explained her picture by saying that the three strong colours in the flag represent the three children in the family. The colours are each child's favourite, and the five stars in each part represent family members. The flagpole represents the father, upon whom the family depends for support. The rope represents the mother, who can make the family

proud by raising the children well. Because the flag is flying, it shows she has done a good job. Note that all parts of the flag are joined together and that one cannot be independent of the other.



Figure 6.20. Gibson Family: Spontaneous drawing by Rachel entitled "Gibson's Family Flag"

Just as family members had grappled with ties to their family of origin, they also struggled with family values that were part of their heritage, but not entirely suited to their present needs. This is illustrated in Extract 7, a family construct of a single-parented family, the Badgley's, where the mother tried to convince her son that a mother and son with their new values about life was a much better family than their previous one, which consisted of mother and father. The mother also cited her family of origin, which although traditional in nature, was deficient in proper values. The son did not agree, and this caused basic conflicts. He wanted his parents to be together, whereas the mother wanted change. The mother saw this as her son being resistant to the divorce, as well as to her new boyfriend.

Extract 7 (Badgley Family Construct #1)



Emergent: Family is Mom and Dad  
Submergent: Family is Mom, Carson and Mandy (the Cat)

In the Rosen family, which was also single-parented, the widowed father tried hard to retain traditional values of both his and his deceased wife's families. This was difficult because he was alone, and found himself adopting easier and lesser values. He felt saddened that his wife's ethnic heritage and values would be lost to their children. He decided to take a lengthy leave of absence from his work in order to stay home and maintain some semblance of their former interests. However, this interfered with his strong value of the "man of the house" being the breadwinner and less-involved parent. It also appeared to allow and encourage the ten-year-old son to take over the authority position in the house.

This drastically affected values and structure within the family. Whereas activities had before been organized, things were now lax and bedtimes were not adhered to. Meals had before been a focus of the family; they now more often consisted of take-out food eaten while watching television. The value on social and community togetherness also changed, and the family became more isolated. As well, religious ideals became less important. Communication deteriorated. Extract 8 indicates that the family wanted to be like they were before, perceived they were trying hard, but they also distanced themselves by not talking, or by engaging in "busy-work."

Extract 8 (Rosen Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Reaching Out and Trying Hard to Express  
Submergent: Talking, Being Busy

In families where there were two active parents, struggles to maintain specific family values still occurred. Sometimes the values of the past were too strict and the current cost too high. Extract 9 represents the Samson family who perceived themselves as being a family totally committed to the usual, proper values and one who wanted to act like it. However, there was also a very active contrast to this, they knew they could act quite differently: a situation they abhorred.

Extract 9 (Samson Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Formal, Well-mannered and Picture-perfect  
Submergent: Interrupting, Forgetting, Eating Like Cows

This same family, which Extract 10 indicates had perceptions of being quite in control, also acknowledged that this was not always the case, and when this happened, it was because the father was absent. The Samson family was in total agreement of this construct. The topic of parents working too much was a constant one across families, and in this particular family it was acknowledged more because the mother was considering a full-time job.

Extract 10 (Samson Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: Directed Emotion/Passion, Committed to Being a Family  
Submergent: Falling Apart a Bit, Dad Works Too Much

In another dually parented family, the adolescent children blamed themselves for not adhering to family values. This is shown in Extract 11.

Extract 11 (Langdon Family Construct #10)  
Emergent: Upholding a Standard  
Submergent: Not Doing It

Most families could agree on what were considered to be the desired family values. However, the more articulate they were and the more they tried to follow them, the more they considered themselves abnormal if they transgressed. The particular family represented in Extract 12 stated that their values consisted of strict honesty, morality, trust, consideration, stability, caring, security, parental roles, goodness, love, church, home-activities, and that above all else, home = family. This family also placed high value on the individual, but maintained that the individual did not supersede the sense of family. As a scale analysis showed, the Robertson family perceived a collective agreement on this shared family construct and seldom strayed into their submergent pole of a dysfunctional family. They had great pride in their family values: some of which came from their families of origin and some of which were new.

**Extract 12** (Robertson Family Construct #4)  
 Emergent: Traditional Family  
 Submergent: Dysfunctional

#### 6.4.3 Family Structure

Family values often dictated the structure of a family. Most family members were astutely aware of their family's hierarchies, and struggles were usual amongst adolescents regarding positions of power.

Figure 6.21 is the father's portrayal of his current family's structure. Note that the "queen-bee" mother is at the top, the "drone" children are at the bottom, and the "worker" father manages from the middle.

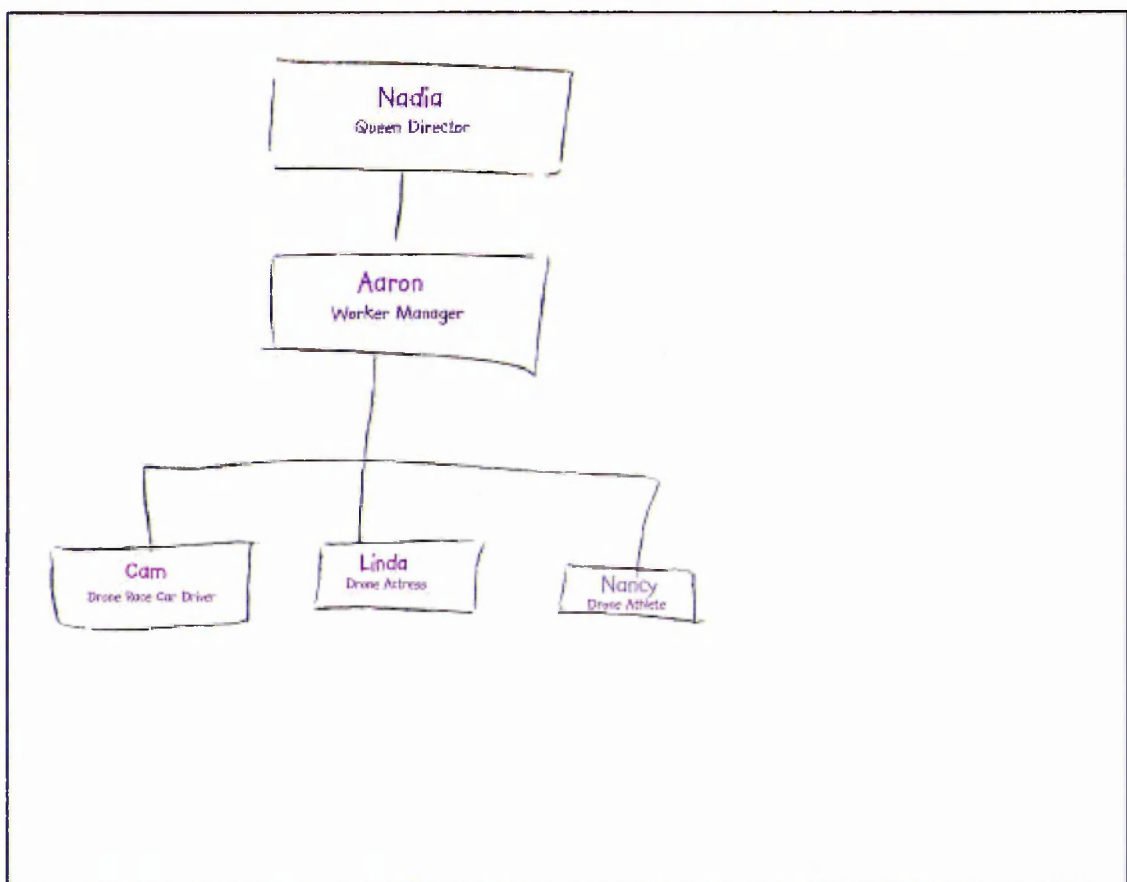


Figure 6.21. Langdon Family: Family drawing by Father entitled "The Langdon's Family Structure"

Family values require a family structure in which to be implemented. In this study, most families have a strong sense of their structure, and most feel a sense of belongingness within it. In dually parented families, the mother was the leader. In the Langdon family, the mother was the head of the family, the decision maker, and the disciplinarian. In Extract 13, the family acknowledged this, even though they disliked the control aspect. The submergent pole of this construct was the perception that the family was not together if it was not being controlled. In some ways, the individual members preferred this pole because they tended towards being apart. Therefore, the control of the mother, as well as the various hierarchies within the family, provided some semblance of order for a family that would remain severely divided without it.

Extract 13 (Langdon Family Construct #1)  
Emergent: Hierarchical and Controlled  
Submergent: Family Not Together

The Whitney family, which consisted primarily of adolescents, echoed the sentiment that being led by their widowed mother was better than the siblings looking after one another. They acknowledged that fights ensued without her leadership. Extract 14 shows the poles of this descriptive construct.

Extract 14 (Whitney Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Needs to Be Led and Held Together  
Submergent: Family is Divided, Siding, "Beats On" One Another, Being Looked After

However, the following Extract 15 shows this same family perceived themselves as sometimes acting as a group of individuals and sometimes as a related unit.

Extract 15 (Whitney Family Construct #2)  
Emergent: Individuals  
Submergent: "Whitney" Name, Mini-society, a Family, Bonded by Relationships

When out of control, this family perceived themselves as quite bizarre. A scale analysis of Extract 16 showed that there was disagreement in the family as to where each member viewed the others on this construct: another indication of the confusion that individuals were experiencing about one another's perception of their family structure.

Extract 16 (Whitney Family Construct #1)  
Emergent: A Circus  
Submergent: Relaxed, Focussed, Organized

When family stresses became too high, this family became severely divided and perceived that they would either be working for or against one another. Extract 17 shows that the submergent pole could place the family unit in danger. Again, in the scale analysis, family members indicated conflict about where they perceived other members on this construct. For example, some thought that most would think they were acting as allies, while others disagreed. However, they did agree as a unit that this next construct was one that identified a troublesome aspect of their family structure.

Extract 17 (Whitney Family Construct #9)  
Emergent: Allies  
Submergent: Traitors

In one single parented family that was trying to define itself as a unit, "every bit as good as, or even better than a dually parented one," the emphasis was on the Badgley's perceiving itself as a unit that was not



constrained by a usual, defined structure but as something more unique and creative. Extract 18 shows how these poles were described.

Extract 18 (Badgley Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Conceptual, Holistic Thinking  
Submergent: Linear Thinking, Deprivation, Still

Gender organization was also a factor in family structure. Here, as in the other themes, there was a cognitive conflict between wanting the heritage of their family of origin or the ideals of a more current society. This conflict is clearly seen in Extracts 19 and 20, which are constructs from the foreign Gibson family. This family was aware that they were leaning towards having an equal type of parenting, which was in direct contrast to what their culture would espouse: that of a male authority. All family members wanted the former, and perceived themselves as having that, but indicated that the father would sometimes revert back to his family of origin's way of handling issues. This family perceived itself as uncertain in several areas and wanted a clearer definition. The confusion was due to living in a foreign country as well as living with emerging adolescents who were assertively female and beginning to tip the delicate gender balance in the family.

Extract 19 (Gibson Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Egalitarian Leadership  
Submergent: Macho-man Leadership

Extract 20 (Gibson Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Uncertain, Needing Definition  
Submergent: One Unit, Dissolved Into the Family, Aware of Each Other's Needs

Gender roles were also a factor in the chores of a family. In most of the families, these roles followed traditional lines with slight variations. Extract 21 is from the Whitney family with three females and two males, where members would do all types of chores when the females were directing, but do gender-related chores when on their own. However, as a general rule, the family did not feel that one gender had authority over the other. There was a pooled perception on this construct.

Extract 21 (Whitney Family Construct #7)  
Emergent: Equals, Family is Extremely Feminine  
Submergent: Gendered Organization

The only exception to this was found in the lesbian-parented family, where there was a direct effort on the mother's part to change the structure to a totally female-oriented one. This is reflected in Extract 22, where the construct indicates perceptions of the Ball family struggling between the traditional and non-traditional aspects of gender structure as well as all other family elements.

Extract 22 (Ball Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: Challenge to Traditional  
Submergent: Valuing of Traditions

Families in this study mostly wanted to appear "normal" in their structure. They preferred a traditional unit with a mother and father at the helm, an organized daily life, and a sense of peace and security. Even the traditional family conflicts where children disputed parental authority were perceived as usual elements of a family structure. However, when families did not fit a usual structure, they strove to develop one that *was*

workable to them, and to have pride in it -- even if their children and society at large did not totally approve. Extract 23 is from a single-parented family that was striving to have pride in their different family structure.

Extract 23 (Ball Family Construct #6)  
Emergent: A "Real" Family, Unique  
Submergent: "Strangers," Described by Society, Fragmented

#### 6.4.4 Family's Everyday Concerns

In this analysis, a family's daily concerns were related to all other family themes. These concerns involved the family's past, present, and future. The connection and distancing to their family of origin was determined largely by their current values and structures, and that in turn influenced their everyday concerns. These concerns, which ultimately affected their perceptions of the future, caused anxieties as they faced the uncertainties ahead.

Figure 6.22 was drawn by the eldest Whitney daughter, illustrating her family. She drew a fair, displaying various sideshows. Note the "Ring of Fire," which reminds the viewer (and artist?) of the father's tragic accident, which involved his truck and him being engulfed by fire. Also note the absence of people, even though this is a depiction of the family. Her explanation was that their family was like a circus, hectic and unpredictable, and that the quality of their day depended upon who came in and out of the gates.



Figure 6.22. Whitney family: Family drawing by Mary entitled "Circus"

The basic, everyday concerns of a family covered three areas: emotions, social skills and overall balance and stability of the family. Emotions and social skills are closely related, and the results of these interactions strongly affect the stability of the family.

Emotions are connected to all behaviours, and when the emotions belong to children who are developmentally delayed, immature, socially unskilled or hormonally headstrong, the family feels the effects. Parental stresses about this, as well as financial concerns, also add to the overall emotional highs and lows. The following examples show how various families in this study perceived areas of emotional concerns to them. One family, in Extract 24, agreed their emotions were often at one extreme or the other, and that neither pole was healthy.

Extract 24 (Gibson Family Construct #6)  
Emergent: Very Emotional  
Submergent: Not Showing Emotions

Extracts 25 to 29 inclusive are from the Langdon's, which is a dually parented family of five. Half of their shared constructs dealt with emotions experienced in their daily life. Children in this family would yell and shout, or lock themselves in their rooms to avoid one another. The last construct relates to the family's pooled perception that the adolescent son is causing a lot of problems in the family.

Extract 25 (Langdon Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: Protected and Forgiving  
Submergent: Lost, Miserable

Extract 26 (Langdon Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Secret/ Private/Needing Space  
Submergent: Agitated, Babbling, Loud

Extract 27 (Langdon Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Angry and Arguing  
Submergent: Having Fun

Extract 28 (Langdon Family Construct #8)  
Emergent: Sense of Humour  
Submergent: A Lot of Trouble

Extract 29 (Langdon Family Construct #2)  
Emergent: Concerned About Cam  
Submergent: More Positive, Easy Life

Extracts 30 to 34 inclusive show emotions from the Whitney's. This family was dealing with the effects of the traumatic death of the father, the acting-out of a troubled adolescent, the crowded environment of university family housing, and an upcoming geographical transition to another unfamiliar part of the country. The majority of this family's shared constructs dealt with emotions as they related to these everyday concerns.

Extract 30 (Whitney Family Construct #8)  
Emergent: Pressured, Stormy, in Peril  
Submergent: Calm, Fun, Easier to Deal With

Extract 31 (Whitney Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Maturing and Changing  
Submergent: Chaos and Carnage

Extract 32 (Whitney Family Construct #6)

Emergent: Nurturing and Caring  
Submergent: Selfish, Aggressive, Immature, Finger-pointing

Extract 33 (Whitney Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: Communicating in the Present, Talking About Good Things, Staying in the Moment 'Cause it's Safe'  
Submergent: Holding Grudges, Don't Talk at All, Worrying that the Past Could Repeat, the Future's Uncertain

Extract 34 (Whitney Family Construct #10)  
Emergent: No mads  
Submergent: Less Stress, More Predictable Routines, More Ties in the Community

In the dually parented Williams family, a scale analysis revealed pooled agreement on the constructs shown in Extracts 35 to 37 inclusive, which indicate that emotions are also tied to family activities. Parents in this family were university educated and had high expectations of their children in their scholastic achievements, as well as in their awareness of the environment. The family vacillated between perceiving themselves as too involved or too lethargic, and were surprised to find that these concerns took up most of their emotions.

Extract 35 (Williams Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: Educated and High Standards  
Submergent: Couch Potato, Bored, "Vegged Out"

Extract 36 (Williams Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Outdoorsy, Active, Busy  
Submergent: Couch Potato, Isolated, Frustrated

Extract 37 (Williams Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Grounded, Down to Earth  
Submergent: Daydreaming, Spontaneous, Overly Ambitious, Blue Sky

Single parented families also had a high percentage of family constructs that dealt with emotions. Extracts 38 to 43 inclusive give examples from three such families.

Extract 38 (Rosen Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Suffering Grief About Mom  
Submergent: Distracted and Healing

Extract 39 (Rosen Family Construct #3)  
Emergent: At Home in Their House  
Submergent: Problems, Scary Feelings

Extract 40 (Thompson Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Happy, Focussed on Making the Best of Life  
Submergent: Unsatisfied, Weak, Fighting, Sad

Extract 41 (Thompson Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Father is Caring and Considerate  
Submergent: Not Connected to Each Other

Extract 42 (Thompson Family Construct #1)  
Emergent: Wanting and Needing to Change, Motivated to be Unlike Father's Bio-family  
Submergent: Indolent

Extract 43 (Badgley Family Construct #4)  
Emergent: Happy, Fun, Sense of Humour  
Submergent: Real Bad, Just About Crazy, Feelings Kept Inside

Stability of the family, as well as its daily state of balance was another concern. Extracts 44 to 48 inclusive show constructs from a stable, dually parented family, who at first glance did not appear to have such concerns.

Extract 44 (Robertson Family Construct #5)  
Emergent: Perfect Balance  
Submergent: Chaotic

Extract 45 (Robertson Family Construct #9)  
Emergent: Home-oriented  
Submergent: Unconnected to Home

Extract 46 (Robertson Family Construct #7)  
Emergent: Provided For  
Submergent: Poor

Extract 47 (Robertson Family Construct #2)  
Emergent: Proud Ownership  
Submergent: Uninvolved

Extract 48 (Robertson Family Construct #10)  
Emergent: Security  
Submergent: Unsafe

Everyday concerns are dynamically linked to a family's connection to their family of origin. If there is extended family support along with sound values and a workable structure, the family has a better chance of maintaining stability. How a family handled associated emotions and behaviours was also directly related to how they perceived themselves and their family, and members often found themselves vacillating between their family's emergent and submergent poles on a regular basis. Striving for balance was a major concern, as change was always occurring.

#### **6.4.5 Management of Change**

In the midst of all the families' thoughts and behaviours, change was always occurring. This theme permeated all others, and affected family members in many ways.

Figure 6.23 shows a family's jointly developed picture of their family unit. It is all about change. This is the Whitney family, who were living on campus in a strange city with their mother finishing her degree, and the children feeling restless. Note the question mark in front of the moving truck, and if it relates to their father -- who was killed in a truck accident -- and the various words used to depict change. Also note the dark section, which covers approximately 40% of the picture, and which reminds me of a thunder cloud hanging over everything. The troubled son in the family did this part, and when the mother noticed his wide sweeps of dark chalk starting across the paper, she drew a dividing line down the paper -- his side and her side. Note how his colours are in direct contrast to the brighter ones, used by the other family members.

Change was a major theme in most families. Whether or not it was wanted, it was seen as inevitable. Extracts 49 and 50 show shared constructs on this theme from two single-parented families. The first family had experienced the death of a parent and the second one had experienced divorce.





Figure 6.23. Whitney family: Joint spontaneous drawing by family entitled "Change"

Extract 49 (Rosen Family Construct #1)  
 Emergent: On a Journey  
 Submergent: Unexpected Twists and Turns

Extract 50 (Badgley Family Construct #2)  
 Emergent: Evolving as a Family  
 Submergent: Stability

Emotions were strong while on the topic of change. Even though it was inevitable, most families were not prepared for change and felt anxious about it. A scale analysis of the first construct in Extract 51 shows a pooled perception in this single parented family that a lot of energy is involved in dealing with change. Specifically, the son had a completely different view of the family's future than did his mother: a situation that caused much conflict. Additional constructs in Extracts 52 to 55 inclusive also show perceptions that change happens and that a variety of emotions can accompany it.

<u>Extract 51</u>	(Badgley Family Construct #3)
Emergent:	Facing the Future with Fierce Determination
Submergent:	Overwhelmed
<u>Extract 52</u>	(Whitney Family Construct #5)
Emergent:	Maturing and Changing
Submergent:	Chaos and Carnage
<u>Extract 53</u>	(Ball Family Construct #5)
Emergent:	Seeing the Big Picture
Submergent:	Confused, Antsy, Panicky
<u>Extract 54</u>	(Thompson Family Construct #1)
Emergent:	Wanting and Needing to Change, Motivated to be Unlike Father's Biological Family
Submergent:	Indolent, Lazy, Afraid of New Changes
<u>Extract 55</u>	(Thompson Family Construct #5)
Emergent:	Happy, Focussed on Making the Best of Life
Submergent:	Unsatisfied, Weak, Fighting, Sad

Generally, families did not want the future to be like the past. However, there were uncertainties about the future, which could make the present look more secure. Whether the present was perceived as positive or negative, it could feel familiar or comfortable and thus lower the motivation for change. Extracts 56 to 58 inclusive show these perceptions about change in both single- and dually-parented families.

<u>Extract 56</u>	(Whitney Family Construct #3)
Emergent:	Communicating in the Present, Talking About Good Things, Staying in the Moment; it's Safe
Submergent:	Holding Grudges, Don't Talk, Worrying That the Past Could Repeat, the Future's Uncertain
<u>Extract 57</u>	(Thompson Family Construct #2)
Emergent:	Future Oriented – It's the Only Way Out
Submergent:	Motionless, Repeating Mistakes from the Past
<u>Extract 58</u>	(Langdon Family Construct #7)
Emergent:	Experiencing Rifts, Not Unified on Goals
Submergent:	Being Like the Brady Bunch

When the future was viewed with optimism, it was usually because it offered the family a sense of stability. However, as indicated in Extracts 59 and 60, the future still remained general and unclear.

<u>Extract 59</u>	(Whitney Family Construct #10)
Emergent:	Nomads
Submergent:	Less Stress, More Predictable Routines, More Ties in the Community
<u>Extract 60</u>	(Gibson Family Construct #3)
Emergent:	Not in Familiar Context, Changes Happening Quickly
Submergent:	Conservative with Change, Adjusting in Time

The topic of change brings the family's major themes full circle and shows how all themes are related and that they all contain uncertainties and conflicts. However, the management of change is especially important in these families, as shared perceptions of their future may inexplicably change their current reality in many areas. While they are coping with the present and past, they are also forging their future. In the process, they will become a new and different family of origin for the next generation, who will no doubt also struggle with its connections, values, structure, everyday concerns, and management of change.

## CHAPTER VII: DISCUSSION

This exploratory study examined families' experiences by using the combined approach of drawings, related reflections and interactive behaviours in order to develop shared family constructs. It aimed to explore the ways in which meanings are constructed and to build on our theoretical understanding of family dynamics, visual expression and construing, with the proposition that a new method of developing family constructs could be useful in clinical settings. It showed that this process could provide constructs as well as themes to encapsulate the families' experiences, and that it could contribute towards the areas of theoretical, methodological and clinical development.

The current research was based on three major areas. Firstly, experiences in my own clinical practice were of special importance. Here, I had worked with family members striving for meaningful changes amongst themselves and found by chance that having individuals draw and explain pictures of themselves allowed for easier communications and helped them to better understand their family unit.

Secondly, in order to provide a structure for this method I then began to search the literature for a theoretical basis and related clinical method, and came upon Kelly's (1955) Personal Construct Theory (PCT). Kelly's theory adopts a constructivist view, which purports that although we can conceive of an objective external reality we can only know our own reality through the lenses of our construct system/understandings. More specifically, Kelly argues that we construct alternative versions of the world, and that these views of reality are the perceptions and meanings that guide our thoughts and actions (p. 48). Kelly's theory suited my clinical beliefs, and intertwined with my clinical experiences to strengthen the foundation of my study.

Kelly's (1955) theory, which dealt mainly with the constructs of individuals, was elaborated upon by Procter (1978, 1996) in his Family Construct System (FCS), which states that families also have identifying constructs. Procter proposed that just as individuals act upon perceived alternatives, so do families act upon a set of shared constructs, which exemplify the family's shared view of their world. His works showed varying grids and verbal methods whereby family members could develop their shared family constructs, and Dallos (1991) expanded upon this in his work on family belief systems. FCS therefore became the third important basis for this study, on which I built the method of using drawings and reflections to develop shared family constructs.

The current research contributed towards *theoretical* development by advancing our understanding of the connections between visual and verbal meaning-making in families. Elaborating on Procter's FCS, the present study also contributed towards *methodological* development in PCT by introducing a new art-oriented method of construct development in families. In addition, the combining of PCT, FCS and art-oriented methods contributed towards the *clinical* development of a new type of family therapy.

An overview of the major themes identified in the analysis of the shared family constructs highlights specific aspects of families' lives. The major themes were: Connection to Family of Origin, Family Values, Family Structures, Family's Everyday Concerns, and Management of Change, and in each of these themes various conflicts were illuminated. For example, in Connection to Family of Origin, constructs showed that family members experienced the push and pulls of wanting to retain family roots, but also wanting to incorporate new ideas. The same applied to themes of Family Values and Family Structures, where the old and the new met face to face. In the old, the nuclear family predominated, but in the new, single-parented families became an option. Family's Everyday Concerns were evidenced in most constructs, as members struggled to handle each



other's emotional and social needs. Management of Change was a theme linked to all others, with members being tied to their past, involved in day to day activities, yet feeling anxious about their lack of preparedness for the future.

In order to describe details of the major themes within this research, the previous chapter presented extracts and drawings from family members. These themes will now be discussed in light of recent related literature in the area of families. The purpose of this discussion is to show how the themes of the families in this research are related to those of families in general.

## **7.1 Relationship of Family Themes to Families in General**

### **7.1.1 Connection to Family of Origin**

In the major family theme, Connection to Family of Origin, there are considerable references to strong feelings of wanting a new type of family: one different from the previous ones. This was often based on knowledge of negative things that had occurred within the family of origin that kept surfacing in the new family, and did not suit their perceptions of what the new family was.

Casey (1989) suggested that this knowledge of and reaction to family history occurs through dialogue with others, especially those who matter to us: for example, our families of origin and past generations. Taylor (1994) points out that we may outgrow significant others, such as parents, or they may no longer be in our lives, but our "conversation with them continues within us as long as we live" (p. 33). Taylor refers to both verbal and nonverbal conversations: those that occur through our actions, emotions, and attitudes with others. He states that these "dialogues *with*" may "sometimes be struggles *against*" and that they connect a family's past, present, and future (p. 33).

Plager (1999) refers to this connection to a family's past as "family legacy" and defines it as "a living tradition, an aspect of the family's life-world reshaped over time in a family's particular situations and influenced by family, culture, and society" (p. 52). She explains that when families are formed, the members bring legacies from their families of origin, and this shapes the individuals and their families. Her conclusion was that, "family legacy can be a gift or curse, depending on how it is taken up" (p. 63).

In the current theme analysis, there were many references to members feeling stressed, both physically and emotionally, over issues relating to their family of origin. Members felt anger if they were rejected, obligated if they were given assistance, guilt and resentment if they did not return favours, hatred if they had been abused, and great feelings of pride if their family was upholding revered traditions of the past. All of these emotions affected their daily activities, and their general sense of well being.

Experiences in families of origin also appeared to affect later marital relationships, as was shown by Campbell, Masters & Johnson (1998). Booth & Edwards (1989) found that even in families in which parents remained married, poor family of origin experiences were related to many difficulties, including marital unhappiness and instability, problems with the children, and lower marital commitment.

This was inherent in some of the conflicts evident in the current theme analysis, especially where parents who were now single and trying to follow their own pursuits, were still struggling with influences of their heritage. It seemed not to matter whether or not they continued to interact with their family of origin: important relational patterns of interaction and adjustment were often transmitted across generational boundaries. Bowen (1978) presented this multigenerational-systemic model and proposed that dynamics within the family of origin constitute a legacy that impacts the trajectory of both individual and family development. Bartle-Haring &

Sabatelli (1998) pursued the multi-generational-systemic model and suggested that a healthy family would be highly differentiated, with individuals having a "legacy of tolerance" resulting in them having a strong sense of self as separate, and a strong sense of self as connected (p. 905).

"Parentification" is another situation arising from family of origin issues that was studied by Chase, Deming & Wells (1998). It is described as a troublesome cross-generational dynamic in which offspring are expected to fulfill deficit needs experienced by the previous generation (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 1973, p.105).

In the present study, parentification surfaced in a family that had experienced a lack of appropriate parenting in their family of origin, which resulted in the father feeling responsible for keeping all his adult siblings and their children connected, even though they lived in different countries.

Gender messages are also transmitted from the past. Softas-Nall, Baldo and Tiedemann (1999) found that working within a three-generation framework, one could trace back similar beliefs and attitudes on gender regarding issues such as money, sex, work, parenting and responsibility.

The above accounts of recent studies within the area of Family of Origin influences relate to the meanings noted in the current theme analysis. The family members in the current study indicated that original shared family constructs from the past generation greatly influenced their lives.

#### ***7.1.2 Family Values***

The theme, Family Values, was also an important one in this study. It built on, and was strongly connected to the first theme. Values are traditionally rooted in families of origin, and are viewed as the qualities which guide families' principles. Values incorporate what a family stands for, and reflect its perceived worth. Values guide them, but like connections to one's family of origin, these values are often changed or discarded as new families are formed and as old ones grow. Recent literature in this area reflects the concerns about the values that were noted in the present theme analysis.

Family values have always been of major concern to societies in general and families in particular, and in many ways the values of both tend to reflect each other. Dallos & Draper (2000) state that although family life is influenced by the ideologies and discourses inherent in a society at a particular historical point, there is considerable diversity in how family members choose to construct their lives (p. 7). For example, families decide on values that could encompass whether or not to be traditional, modern, nuclear, single, passive, aggressive, egalitarian, male-dominated, or lesbian.

Families in the present study reflected this. Underlying the theme of Family Values, were many feelings and decisions that were in conflict with the values of past families or of the current society, but were believed to work best for them. Single parents strove to convince themselves, their children, and others that their present type of family was the most effective. Parents distanced themselves from aging parents whose belief systems they felt were not enhancing their family. Traditional spiritual or religious practices were altered in order to suit a family's life in a new country, and one family's values around members "living together no matter what happens" were changed in order for them to place one of the children in foster care, so that they could obtain a sense of peace and calm.

However, families in this study consistently appeared to feel pressured to live up to what they felt their values *should* be -- that which was a voice from their family's past, as well as from their own family, and current society. Parents felt pressure to be at home more with their children while having to work long hours in order to

maintain their current lifestyle. Children felt stressed as they tried to achieve higher academic standings while living lives too full of extra-curricular activities, and families worked hard to “keep up appearances” even though poor finances or health made it difficult. They were well aware of society’s values in relation to their own behaviours.

Grolnick & Kurowski (1999) found that children’s development is more optimal if home and school values are similar. This is consistent with developmental theories focussing on connections (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and systems theories, which stress overlapping effects of family member’s beliefs and actions (c.g. Epstein, 1990). This study’s analysis revealed that values of self, family and culture were firmly intertwined.

Sam (2000) suggests that values are standards for guiding behaviours of people, and that they have a protective function. He states that the retention of family values is conducive to a positive family atmosphere, as well as adaptive to the family’s society.

Values that organize a family’s response to caregiving and contact among members are fundamental to the family system and are likely to structure other family dynamics. Pyke & Bengtson (1996) showed that “collectivist” families, who valued self-reliance, often viewed the care of elderly parents as an unwanted burden and provided only minimal care; whereas “individualist” families, who valued strong commitments and interdependence, assumed more responsibilities and used caregiving to reaffirm family ties. In the present study, examples of family values affecting filial care were evident. In one family that had an ethnic orientation towards collectivist values, the widowed father not only cared on a daily basis for his aging mother, but also included her as an active caregiver of his children. By contrast, several families who appeared to have stronger individualist values were more distant from their aging parents, viewing them as being self-reliant and therefore not wanting assistance or too many family visits.

In summary, the present theme analysis showed that underlying shared constructs reflected family member’s realities of pushes and pulls as they tried to live the values that were expected of them, both in their family as well as in the greater society.

### ***7.1.3 Family Structure***

Structure was a recurring theme in the current study. Families had a strong sense of it, knew the basis of it and were well aware of the associated hierarchies: something that family members constantly challenged. Mainly they wanted the structure of their own family to be a normal one: one that was approved of by society, yet one in which their uniqueness could be acknowledged and honoured.

Several types of structure were evident amongst the families, and all of them had their subsystems. Some subsystems consisted of the parents, the siblings, or coalitions of various family members.

Family of origin experiences have been shown to affect later family structures. Barber (2000), in her longitudinal study of 835 mother-child pairs, stated that values, beliefs and attitudes expressed in the family of origin have significant effects on the children’s subsequent formation of their own families (p. 320). This type of influence on family structure was also found in most families in the present research. In one dually parented family, the mother was the undisputed authority in the family. She referred to her upbringing in a female-dominated home, where there were only a mother, sisters, and aunts present. She stated that it was the only type of family she knew, that it was good, and that she realized it influenced her behaviours as a mother in her present family. One single mother referred to the patriarchal authority in her family of origin, and was determined to make her present family an egalitarian one. Another single parent liked the strong cultural aspects of his family of

origin, and was determined to bring this into his current family: including an extended family of uncles, aunts, nieces, and nephews. He felt that to do otherwise would impede his daughter's development.

Dallos & Draper (2000) stated that a family's structure relates directly to its underlying belief system, and "as the structure of the family changes, each and every member of the family also changes in terms of their roles, experiences and identities" (p. 40). Thus, structure = belief system.

The effects of family structure on individual family members are many. Using data from a longitudinal study, Carlson & Corcoran (2001) looked at these effects on children's behavioural and cognitive outcomes. They found that there are at least four primary causal mechanisms responsible: economic status, parental socialization, childhood stress, and maternal psychological well-being. They suggested that these mechanisms were neither exclusive nor exhaustive, and that several could be operating simultaneously or interactively (p. 780). Most research has compared single-parent families to two-parent families. Typically, children reared in the former do not fare as well as those reared in the latter, regardless of race, education or parental remarriage. The deficits include higher levels of academic, emotional, psychological and behavioural problems (McLanahan, 1997).

Recent literature relating to the structure of families tends to mirror the realities of families in the current study. The study's traditional two-parent families tended to be fairly stable, to be strongly led by the mother, to have a father who evidenced lesser control and spent fewer hours with the children, to be dealing with gender-related issues and tasks, and to be comfortably reflecting traditions of their family of origin. By contrast, single parent families mainly had greater financial or social concerns, were questioned more by children on authority issues, were less gender-oriented in their household tasks, and had greater difficulties melding their family of origin experiences with their own more unique and current ones. A family's structure was therefore related to its origins and values, which in turn were evidenced in the family's everyday concerns.

#### ***7.1.4 Family's Everyday Concerns***

The current analysis showed connections amongst all of the major themes, with the family's thoughts and behaviours relating to their family of origin, their family's values, structure and change, all surfacing in their everyday concerns. Emotions tended to run high, and this in turn affected member's social interactions, as well as the family's sense of balance. Emotions of adolescents were often the focus. Rationalization and projection were frequently used to explain them, with family members blaming the adolescents for the family's emotional climate: alluding to hormonal and other physiological changes that the adolescents were obviously experiencing. However, Larson & Gilman (1999) and Hatfield, Cacioppo & Rapson (1992) showed that work-related stresses of the parents accounted for most of the expressed emotions, and that temporary withdrawal of the parents from the family appeared to alleviate both parental and family stress. These studies suggest that adolescents may not be the prime cause of emotional stress in families -- they may just be the more obvious one.

Events in the family also contribute to its emotional climate. For example, a grandmother caring for her grandchildren on a somewhat regular basis can result in many emotions, which can affect the family (Gattai & Musatti, 1999). This was found in the present study, where the grandmother took on a new authority, thus delighting the grandchildren, but posing a dependency between the parent and the grandmother.

Marital conflicts in a family can also result in emotional and behavioural effects in family members (Jenkins, 2000), and this could be related to one family in the current study, which was experiencing extremely

aggressive behaviours amongst the children. In this family, there were semblances of marital discord, but no open discussion regarding it.

Social skills are also an important factor in families. Such skills have been shown to be important for mental health and personal adjustment in childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood (Parker & Asher, 1987). In the current study, most married mothers and fathers appeared to have socially appropriate ways of interacting with each other as well as with their children. The same was true for the single parents. Problems regarding social skills surfaced mostly amongst the adolescents, yet seldom with their peers at school.

Balance and stability were also major concerns. These were manifested in shared family constructs that referred to the financial status of the family, whether or not everyone was well provided for, if a sense of security prevailed, if members felt a strong connection to their home, whether or not they felt a sense of involvement with other members of their family, and whether or not the parent's work obligations left enough time for family activities. Thomson Ross & Hill (2000) referred to family stability as "predictability," with the opposite being "unpredictability," a situation which could produce a sense of chaos (p. 551) and hopelessness (Alloy & Clements, 1998).

In the present study, one particular family was experiencing a sense of hopelessness, probably due to the recent, tragic loss of one of the parents. Although this family was determined to move forward, members were experiencing confusion, clearly displayed by the children's behaviours. Problems with social interactions were commonplace, both at school and at home. Family management became dispersed amongst family members, and rules were lax. Further, there was no nearby familial support system available, and a sense of desperateness often overtook them. One of their shared family constructs included the words, "chaos and carnage."

Familial stability and balance have also been linked to parenting qualities, and not the situation (Metsapelto, Pulkkinen & Poikkeus, 2001), perceived approval from friends and family members (Felmlee 2001), home- and balance-based leisure activities (Zabriskie 2001), perceived parental predictability in family of origin (Hill, Ross & Low, 1997), biosocial aspects (Booth, Carver & Granger, 2000), and perceived job flexibility (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris & Weitzman, 2001).

In the present study, the aspect of work-family balance was evident in several of the families. Many fathers were seen to be devoting too much time to their work, and family members resented it. Parents would point out the financial gains, but the children wanted their parent's time more. An interesting point is that all of these fathers were of a higher occupational level, all brought work home, and all felt guilty about it.

Stability, which can greatly affect a family, appears to be an illusive concept. However, it is important to note that there is no one factor that can be said to cause instability -- or any of the other everyday family concerns mentioned above. For example, several of the retrospective and correlational studies cited here imply that experiences from a parent's childhood can affect how they parent and how their children respond, but this does not prove a direct causality, as many other contributing factors may be involved. Similar points have been made about intergenerational cycles in the study of child abuse (Croghan & Miell, 1999, p. 319).

#### ***7.1.5 Management of Change***

This theme pervaded the very core of families in the present research. The literature also attaches considerable importance to the topic of change.

Developmental theory is a perspective that views people and families as, "changing over the life course as circumstances and responsibilities alter" (Bird & Melville, 1994, p. 169). Families in the present study

mirrored this, as they were in constant flux. The theme analysis indicated that family members were aware that life was constantly changing for them, and they had strong emotions in relation to it. Children differed from their parents in how they viewed the future, but apprehension was the common denominator. Change was seen as inevitable; it could encompass moving to a new neighbourhood or another city, leaving old friends behind, living in a new house, going to a new school, experiencing parents divorcing, grandparents dying, or financial situations changing. Whatever the perceived change – family members were not prepared for it.

Even the basic physiological changes took family members by surprise. Adolescents with fluctuating hormones and desires for independence were a common disturbance. Parents strove to handle the effects, but found them inherently stressful, and worried that the children would grow into irresponsible adults. Transitions both to and from adolescence have been noted to bring increased tension, and these changes are often seen by the adolescent or the family as indicators of success or failure: either in the adolescent or in the family, or both (Dornbush, 2000 and Schwartz, Kaslow, Seeley & Lewinsohn, 2000).

Changing relationships within the family also brought stress. Children and parents alike coped with an ever-changing family circle, as new babies arrived, older children left home, or different parental arrangements came into effect. White (2001) studied relationships amongst siblings over the life-span and showed that siblings may have to resolve various rivalries and dependencies with each other as well as with their parents in order to mature successfully, with varying levels of associated stress being experienced by the larger family. This was often noted in the present study.

Parental relationships also change. When this change has to do with the dissolution of a father and mother's marriage, the effect on family members can be severe (Sun, 2001). In the present study, several families were experiencing post-divorce problems related to the sweeping changes that occurred when the parents parted. The theme analysis indicated that many aspects of these problems -- for example, a parent becoming more absent, and a child feeling abandoned -- had occurred before the break-up. Children talked about crying at school regarding such things.

The effects of change in core family relationships are extensive. It appears that if families were more aware of such effects and better prepared for them, the damage could be minimized. In the present study, family members sensed that change was occurring, often even wanted it, but were inadequately prepared.

Death in a family also affects change (Rotter, 2000). In the present study, several families had experienced the loss of loved ones: parents, children, or grandparents. The process of grief and mourning affected each member's life -- their memories of the past with that person, and their thoughts about the future without them. In one family, where a grandparent had been diagnosed with a terminal illness, the family members were addressing it adequately. However, in situations where death had been sudden or tragic, the shock and grief of family members was immense, and the reorganization of the family unit was a difficult task. It was sometimes a trigger for inappropriate and unsuccessful attempts at new power liaisons, or for victimization of more vulnerable members. The effects on the children could be seen in their poorly managed attempts at keeping up the basic necessities of life: for example, sleeping, eating, and interacting with others. Academic performance was also negatively affected, as was their self-esteem, and the handling of their emotions. Parents were even more affected: handling their own grief as well as that of the other members, and struggling to maintain a sense of balance within the family unit.

A change in family relationships can sometimes mean an unexpected change in environments. Several families in the current study had either just moved or were contemplating it. In one family, the death of a parent culminated in new directions for the family, as well as a new home for it. In another family, a parent's work situation brought the family to a new land. In yet another family, a recent move became associated with the break-up of the parent's marriage.

Moves affected family members in different ways. For example, one lonely family from another part of the country felt that they looked and acted differently from the others in their current neighbourhood, and therefore kept mostly to themselves. They talked constantly of when they could move back to their original community, even though they also expressed a desire to settle down anywhere and end their nomadic existence. Another family that was indeed very different in their attire and outlook, spent considerable time and energy merging with their new neighbours, even though their faltering use of a new language made life difficult, especially for the children. Some nearby neighbours from their own country helped them ease their way into the new society. As in other areas of change, adjustments to a new environment are many and involve changes in identity, behaviour, cognitions, and attitudes (Miranda & Matheny, 2000).

The management of change is a crucial aspect of family life. In the present study, as well as in recent research, it was found that family members are often poorly equipped to handle change successfully.

## **7.2 Summary**

The five major family themes in this study appeared to be ones often associated with families in general. Families experienced issues related to their roots, their values, and their structure, their concerns about the future, as well as how they planned to manage their everyday experiences.

This study's themes were built upon shared family constructs, and as the families indicated, they perceived themselves as having polar realities. For example, members realized that they could be active or lazy, happy or sad, uncertain or sure -- and that they added to the dissent or cohesion as they perceived their position. In voicing and living these perceptions, members took their stand and affected the family unit. Meanings were articulated with great intensity. It appeared that the individual task of drawing sometimes propelled the artist/family member to describe, with heightened propensity, the nature and message of the drawing. It often appeared that the family member needed to defend the drawing so that its inherent meanings could be understood and perhaps even acted upon. In many instances, the message was a plea for changes in the everyday life of the family. This was a surprise to me, as my review of the literature found relatively little concern placed on the everyday functioning of the family, with values, structure and roots appearing more frequently and given greater significance. In this study, however, the percentage of issues relating to a family's everyday concerns was 43%, which was more than any other theme analyzed. Perhaps this new method of family construct development -- drawing and reflecting -- allowed an easier way of uncovering these everyday concerns, or perhaps there are simply more of them in this small, diverse sample, or at this time in history.

Observing a family developing their constructs allows a window into the children's perception of the family. In the present study, children appeared to strongly influence their families, a topic not generally pursued in the family literature. Usually, parents are seen to be the ones who develop structure, shape beliefs, determine activities and environments, and lead the family. In the present study, children often became enmeshed in those roles. It was not unusual for children to choose and receive their own menus, financial allowances, computer equipment, curfews, activities, and schools to attend. Sometimes family hierarchies were rearranged, with intra-

family alliances threatening and weakening the parental leadership. Again, this situation may be unique to the small number of families in this study, or it may be that the present method of examining families' experiences and belief systems provided a new way of analyzing the impact of children on their families. This could be because the drawing activities allowed children to communicate on an equal plane with their parents.

The scale analysis in this study also illuminated another interesting aspect not generally pursued in the literature: that there can be extreme variations in how individuals view their family, yet these same individuals can come together to form a strong collective view of their family. In this study, within the interactive group environment, perhaps the individually drawn and reflected portrayals of family characteristics assisted members in actually seeing how their own perspectives entwined with those of the other members to form the shared family constructs that they went on to develop. Perhaps, too, this method of analysis allowed a clearer portrayal of family differences than has been generally indicated in the literature.

Areas of future research were also identified in this study. Material from the families suggested several topics that could be further developed, for example: who is the most powerful person in a family, and how is that dominance challenged by other members; what are the effects on families of such traumas as them moving to a strange city, placing a child in foster care, or experiencing the untimely/tragic death of a parent; how is the family affected by having university-student-parents; how do children view and react to their parent's excessive work hours; what are the effects of lesbian parenting on the extended family; how do parent's high expectations of their children affect the children's later development; what parental attributes are related to an adolescent's perception of security within the family; how do children's disabilities affect relationships amongst family members; why do some parents prefer their children to address them by their first names rather than by traditional titles and what are the effects on the family; how is balance maintained in a family over many years; and how do individual differences in a family combine to make it a strong unit?

Therefore, although the themes in this study were related to those often associated with families in general, the present research with its new methodology allowed insight into some new areas within the literature, added to the existing store of knowledge about families, and suggested further areas of research development. Overall, this study showed that each family member was inexplicably involved in connections to the family's past, present, and future, and that each member was an integral part of the family's values and structure. This is revealed in the current theme analysis, which examined various shared perceptions of families, and showed common themes that connected and bound family members together. In their totality, these themes gave structure to the families' sense of identity.

It is important to note, however, that these themes were not descriptions of the families themselves, but rather the meanings that members gave to their families at a certain point in time. The families initially portrayed their shared meanings and realities in the formation of their family constructs, which in turn were portrayed in the family themes.

To quote Smith (1996), "again, the phenomenological slant is important. It is the perception [of the family] which is significant rather than [the family] per se" (p. 270).

### ***7.2.1 Methodological Critique***

In this study, I have employed rigorous research methods in order to produce a thesis of originality and value. Trustworthiness has been its major underpinning, and in that regard I have been methodologically aware in



pursuing related literature, seeking judgment of my research community, and in seeking and receiving feedback from my research participants. Seale (1999) discussed factors relating to trustworthiness in research and associated matters of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity, and cited Lincoln & Guba (1985), who put forth a four point criterion 'translation' of these factors for qualitative research. These criterion, which I applied in my current study, include the following: *credibility* through prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, and exposure of my research report to criticism by disinterested peer reviewers as well as by my thesis supervisors; *transferability* by providing a detailed, rich description of the setting studied; *dependability* by leaving an 'audit trail' of documentation of data, method and decisions made during the research as well as at its end; and *confirmability* by 'auditing the audit trail' -- a reflexive, methodologically self-critical account of how the research was done (Seale, 1999, pp. 43-48). These criteria were crucial in producing a thesis transparently rich in its methodological awareness and procedures.

As noted in an earlier chapter, the sample was small (37 participants), but rich in diversity. For example, there was a 54 year age range (from age 4 to 58), three types of ethnic backgrounds, and two types of families -- one in which families were dually parented and one in which families were single parented. Dually parented families had a mother and father who were married. Single parented families had either a mother or father, who was divorced, widowed or never married. In addition, one single parent stated that she was lesbian. Across the two types of families, there were also interesting differences. Some parents were university students and others were either stay-at-home parents or workers employed in the local community. Living arrangements also varied, with some families living in houses, and others in apartments or university units.

Participants also shared similarities. For example, all parents had post-secondary educations, all participants spoke English and appeared normal in the areas of intelligence, hearing, seeing and drawing, and all were volunteers. Across the sample, it was my distinct perception that all participants appreciated education and felt positive about being involved in academic research. It also appeared that they valued their family and the opportunity to engage in joint activities with each other and that they found the research sessions pleasant and well within their scope of abilities. It was also evident that participants were of fairly similar energy levels, approached the study's activities with a sense of seriousness, and found the results useful.

All of these characteristics make the present sample a unique one, with associated findings related specifically to the current research. However, the theme analysis and literature review indicate that families in general share many of the above similarities and differences, and it is therefore conceivable that similar samples could engage somewhat similarly in a research design comparable to the current one that used the aforementioned research criterion of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

It is also important to note that the collaborative nature of the current research activities greatly assisted in the achievement of these criteria. Member validation was constant. Along with the participants, I engaged in an interpretive, reflexive process in the co-construction of their shared family constructs, based on their drawings and associated reflections and interactive behaviours. There were always 'member checks' presented to the participants -- showing and verbalizing their materials and decisions. Although this is the positive side of the co-constructive, interpretative process, there is also the dilemma of the "blurred lines" whereby it becomes difficult to precisely define and measure each participant's contributions. This is something which is inherent in ethnographic studies (Silverman, 1991, p. 61) and to counteract this in the present research, videotapes and

observer's notes were used to help "externalize" proceedings. Nevertheless, collaboration and co-construction were basic to the methodology.

This study also brought special ethical considerations because of the children involved. Firstly, it is important that children engage in research activities because of their own choosing, have their feelings respected, and that the research experience be a positive, safe and healthy one for them -- both during the sessions as well as later in their free time at home. In the present study, special care was taken to ensure that these ethical criteria were met.

The drawing activities were helpful in that they tended to create a relaxing and equalizing environment for all participants, but I was still aware that some children might have been reluctant to say or do things that although appropriate, would bring disapproval from their parents. In response to this, I tried to remain aware of behaviours that could indicate this might be happening. For example, I would intermittently ask for assurance from all parties -- especially the children -- that they were being honest/not reacting to other pressures.

I realize that in such family situations, everyone affects each other, and that shared constructs are jointly decided, but it is nevertheless a constant effort to keep abreast of any specific acts of intimidation that might occur from parents/older children towards younger family members. Whether or not we were totally successful is difficult to know. If it appeared that a negative situation was starting -- and it rarely did -- I would intervene and handle it appropriately. Meanwhile, the assistants would record their observations, which would later help us in understanding the dynamics of that particular family. These are some of the challenges of working with families.

Overall, this was an exploratory, qualitative study, and as Polkinghorne suggested, qualitative work seeks "knowledge that deepens and enlarges the understanding of human existence" (1988, p. 159) rather than prediction and control.

From my twenty-plus years of clinical experiences as well as those from this study, I bring an ethnographic and interpretive perspective to the research, whose basic theoretical paradigms I have sought to elaborate and extend. In retrospect, it is quite surprising that ten families so easily volunteered themselves for a project in which they were obviously taking a risk in sharing their intimate thoughts and behaviours with a stranger -- who would record them. The emotions with which they pursued their drawings, reflections and constructs never ceased to amaze and humble me. That this could occur in a rather public research situation bodes well for the success of this method in more private ones.

Is replication a consideration? The constructivist view of multiple realities purports that different people are bound to have different accounts of the world, and that the qualitative researcher's role is perhaps no more than to facilitate the expression of these accounts (Seale, 1999). Given that, I would nevertheless propose that normal family members of similar orientations, who are able to think, see, hear and use a pencil, could with the appropriate motivation, materials, conditions and similar theoretical base and therapeutic facilitation noted in this research, fairly well engage themselves in this study's new, shared family construct development process, and achieve relevant results. This is similar to some traditional accounts of philosophers, psychologists and biologists regarding how the process of science normally works (Stiles, 1981, p. 613).

In future research using this method, it would be helpful to include participants from diverse ethnic and socio economic backgrounds in order to help determine whether this method is applicable to a wider population. The inclusion of extended family members such as grandparents, aunts, uncles and former spouses may also allow for a more complete family perspective, thus providing members with additional insights when formulating

their constructs. In addition, increasing the number of sessions with family members could perhaps add to the quantity and richness of their constructs. In this regard, a longitudinal format, where drawings and shared family constructs are re-evaluated over a more extended period of time, could help determine factors relating to construct change.

### **7.2.2 Reflective Critique**

The reflections of my own experiences are relevant in this constructivist, ethnographic study. The professional, interpretative lenses I employed were those of a clinical family therapist-researcher looking for a sound theoretically-based, art-oriented method that would enhance family therapy. My personal interpretative lenses were those of a highly involved family member: most notably that of a wife, and mother of four sons. Both sets of interpretative lenses were therefore family tinted.

Methodologically, it was productive and fun to use the art-oriented method along with Procter's (1996) Family Construct System (FCS). Participants employed it with ease, and the high amount of energy and interest that they put into their drawings and constructs pleasantly surprised me.

However, I was often disappointed in having to avoid or sideline therapeutic issues that surfaced during family members' construct development. It was usual for me to leave a session feeling as if there was unfinished business: whether this was seen through my personal or therapeutic lenses was difficult to tell. Family feelings run deep, and whether they are yours or your participants', they can strike a nerve. "Qualitative research seems facilitated by immersion in the material" (Stiles, 1981, p. 604) and this ethnographic study was no exception. As suggested by Stiles, handling such situations with disclosure helped everyone involved. Upon reflection, I can see that the uneasiness I felt with avoiding therapeutic issues in this research was directly related to the opposite experiences I have in my clinical practice, where I actively pursue therapy and implement some sort of closure at each session's end.

There is also the question as to what extent my collaborative stance affected the participants' involvement in the study. Because I was the researcher, it was apparent that my interactions with the family members were treated with associated respect and that their emotions therefore stayed within reasonable bounds. This may have affected the content or intensity of the construct development. In addition, the fact that I was a female and a mother often prompted related comments or questions, which participants would sometimes try to integrate into their family material. My stance would be to reiterate that these were *my* own perspectives, preconceptions and realities, and that *theirs* were what was needed. This would help in clarifying differences amongst us, in eliciting *their* meanings of the material and in keeping us on track. Videotapes and notes of the sessions also helped me to see the possible "colouring" effects of my interpretative, collaborative interactions with the participants, and when this appeared obvious, I would discuss it with them. Nevertheless, as a group, we were all involved in the process and co-constructed the results.

### **7.2.3 Clinical Applications**

I propose that the methods and related theoretical orientations of this study could be directly applied to family therapy settings. I believe that the basis of Procter's (1996) shared family construct development is in itself an assessment process, which gives families a strong sense of their realities. This in turn invites consideration of possible changes, and presents a useful road map for therapy. This process was obvious in the present study, where therapeutic issues often evolved from the drawings, reflections and associated behaviours of family members, and where members adamantly wanted to pursue their concerns. Unfortunately, therapy was not

within the scope of our research goals, but it appeared that therapy could be positively entwined with the present construct development method.

Specific therapies often deal with specific types of clients. My own clinical practice deals mainly with clients who are normal and who are not seriously disordered. I therefore feel comfortable in recommending methods of the present study to other clinicians whose client base and professional background is similar to mine. Although I am a clinical psychologist, I am not an art therapist. I feel the latter distinction is not necessary in this type of therapy with normal clients, as art-oriented construct development is based on the *client's* meanings of reality, and not on the therapist's.

It is apparent that clients would have to have to be psychologically and physically developed, at least to the point of a 4 year old, in being able to involve themselves successfully in the methods described in the present study. I am not certain of its applicability to clients who are not within a normal range, yet I have used similar methods with functioning clients who are moderately depressed or anxious. I invite readers to draw inferences from details of my own participants, and to decide whether or not it could be useful to therapists who work with other types of family members. Further research could expand on mine by employing specific types of clinical families

## CONCLUSION

The results of this research suggest that family members' drawings and reflections can assist in the development of shared family constructs. In this study, meanings portrayed in family members' drawings and reflections served to organize and form shared family constructs. Collective constructs were then subjected to a grid-scale analysis in which family members indicated where they and the other family members perceived themselves on the constructs. A phenomenological theme analysis was then undertaken. This analysis produced five major themes across the ten families: Connection to Family of Origin, Family Values, Family Structures, Family's Everyday Concerns, and Management of Change. Drawings done by family members were presented as visual representations of the constructs and themes. The topics of these construct-based themes were shown to be relevant to recent literature on families' functioning.

Kelly (1955) asserted in his Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) that constructs of individuals could be elucidated through basic tests, and Procter (1978, 1996) and Dallos (1991) demonstrated that constructs of families could be acquired by asking family members for verbal descriptions of their families. Because these methods had shortcomings that could affect the overall formulation of constructs, the present study undertook a new, comprehensive method, which was simple and non-threatening to the participants. It gave all of the family members an equal opportunity to portray their family and to develop shared family constructs. Drawings and reflections have not previously been used in the development of shared family constructs. Thus, this research built on PCP and its related methods.

The research reported here is the first to demonstrate how drawings and reflections can assist in the development of shared family constructs. Using the same method, different families developed constructs, unique to themselves. Therefore, the methodological refinements suggested in this thesis may be valuable to future research that employs other populations and contexts.

## REFERENCES

- Aach-Feldman, S., & Kunkle-Miller, C. (1987). A developmental approach to art therapy. In A. J. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to Art Therapy: Theory and Techniques* (pp. 251-276). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Ackerman, N. W. (1938). The unity of the family. *Archives of Pediatrics*, 55, 51-62.
- Ackerman, N. W. (1956). Interlocking pathology in family relationships. In S. Rado & G. Daniels (Eds.), *Changing Conceptions of Psychoanalytic Medicine* (pp. 151-165). New York: Grune & Stratton.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of Attachment: A Psychological Study of the Strange Situation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum.
- Albom, M. (1997). *Tuesdays with Morrie*. New York: Doubleday.
- Aldous, J., & Mulligan, G. M. (1998). Fathering over time: What makes the difference? *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 809-822.
- Alloy, L. B., & Clements, C. M. (1998). Hopelessness theory of depression: Tests of the symptom component. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 22, 303-335.
- Amato, P. R. (2000). The consequences of divorce for adults and children. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 1269-1288.
- Anastasi, A. (1988). *Psychological Testing* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Macmillan.
- Anderson, H., & Goolishian, H. (1988). Human systems as linguistic systems: Preliminary and evolving ideas about the implications for clinical theory. *Family Process*, 27, 371-394.
- Anderson, H., & Goolishian, H. (1992). The client is the expert: A not knowing approach to therapy. In S. McNamee & K. G. Gergen (Eds.), *Therapy as Social Construction* (pp. 25-39), CA: Sage.
- Andersen, T. (1991). *The Reflecting Team: Dialogues and Dialogues about the Dialogues*. New York: Norton.
- Anderson, T. (1993). See and hear, and be seen and heard. In S. Friedman (Ed.), *The New Language of Change: Constructive Collaboration in Psychotherapy* (pp. 303-323). New York: Guildford Press.
- Avis, J. M. (1986). Feminist issues in family therapy. In F. P. Piercy, D. H. Sprenkle, & Associates (Eds.), *Family Therapy Sourcebook* (pp. 213-242). New York: Guildford Press.
- Barber, J. S. (2000). Intergenerational influences on the entry into parenthood: Mothers' preferences for family and nonfamily behavior. *Social Forces*, 79, 319-349.
- Barnett, R. C., & Shen, Y. (1997). Gender, high- and low-schedule-control housework tasks, and psychological distress: A study of dual earner couples. *Journal of Family Issues*, 18, 403-428.
- Bartel-Haring, S., & Sabatelli, R. (1998). An intergenerational examination of patterns of individual and family adjustment. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60, 903-912.
- Bar-Yosef, R. W. (1994). Family sociology in the light of social change and biotechnical innovations. *The European Journal of Social Sciences*, 7, 69-83.

- Bateson, G. (1958). *Naven*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: E. P. Dutton.
- Bateson, G., Jackson, D. D., Haley, J., & Weakland, J. (1956). Towards a theory of schizophrenia. *Behavioral Science*, 1, 251-264.
- Belnick, J. (1993). A crisis intervention model for family art therapy. In D. Linesch (Ed.), *Art Therapy with Families in Crisis: Overcoming Resistance Through Nonverbal Expression* (pp. 23-45). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Bernard, J. (1972). *The Future of Marriage*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y. H., Segall, M. H., & Dasen, P. R. (1992) *Cross-Cultural Psychology: Research and Application*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bertalanffy, L. von. (1968). *General Systems Theory: Foundation, Development, Applications*. New York: Braziller.
- Betensky, M. G. (1987). Phenomenology of therapeutic art expression and art therapy. In J. A. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to Art therapy: Theory and Techniques* (pp. 149-166). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Bird, G., & Melville, K. (1994). *Families and Intimate Relationships*. New York: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Booth, A., Carver, K., & Granger, D.S. (2000). Biosocial perspectives on the family. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 1018-1035.
- Booth, A., & Edwards, J. N. (1989). Transmission of marital and family quality over the generations: The effect of parental divorce and unhappiness. *Journal of Divorce*, 13, 41-58.
- Boszormenyi-Nagy, I., & Spark, G. (1973). *Invisible Loyalties: Reciprocity in Intergenerational Family Therapy*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bowen, M. (1960). A family concept of schizophrenia. In D. D. Jackson (Ed.), *The Etiology of Schizophrenia* (pp. 125-130). New York: Basic Books.
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bowlby, J. (1949). The study and reduction of group tension in the family. *Human Relations*, 2, 123-128.
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss (Vol. 1 Attachment)*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brammer, L. M., Abrego, P. J., & Shostrom, E. L. (1993). *Therapeutic Counseling and Psychotherapy* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Breunlin, D. C., Schwartz, R. C., & Mac Kune-Karrer, B. (1992). *Metaframeworks: Transcending the Models of Family Therapy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brody, L. R. (1996). Gender, emotional expression, and parent-child boundaries. In S. Fein, R. D. Kavanaugh, & B. Zimmerberg (Eds.), *Emotion: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 139-170). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bronfenbrenner, V. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Brunner, J. (1964). The course of cognitive growth. *American Psychologist*, 19, 1-15.
- Burlingham, D. T. (1951). *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*. New York: International University Press.
- Burns, R. C. (1987). *Kinetic-House-Tree-Person Drawings (K-H-T-P): An Interpretive Manual*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Burns, R. C., & Kaufman, S. H. (1970). *Kinetic Family Drawings (K-F-D): An Introduction to Understanding Children Through Kinetic Drawings*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Burt, C. (1921). *Mental and Scholastic Tests*. London: P. S. Ling & Son.
- Campbell, J. L., Masters, M. A. & Johnson, M. E. (1998). Relationships of parental alcoholism to family-of-origin functioning and current marital satisfaction. *Journal of Addictions and Offender Counselling*, 19, 7-15.
- Cardinal, R. (1989). The primitive scratch. In A. Gilroy & T. Dalley (Eds.), *Pictures at an Exhibition*. (pp 50-75). London: Tavistock/Routledge.
- Carlson, M. J., & Corcoran, M. E. (2001). Family structure and children's behavioural and cognitive outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63, 779-793.
- Casey, B. C. (1989). The family as a system. In P. J. Bonar (Ed.), *Nurses and Family Health Promotion* (pp. 37-46). Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins.
- Case, C., & Dalley, T. (1992). *The Handbook of Art Therapy*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.
- Chase, N. D., Deming, M. P., & Wells, M. C. (1998). Parentification, parental alcoholism, and academic status among young adults. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 26, 105-115.
- Collier, J., Rosaldo, M. Z., & Yanigisako. (1982). Is there a family? New anthropological views. In B. Thorne & M. Yalom (Eds.), *Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions* (pp. 85-120). New York: Longman.
- Cone, J. D. (1982). Validity of direct observation in assessment procedures. In D. P. Hartman (Ed.), *Using Observers to Study Behavior* (pp. 67-79). New York: Wiley.
- Conrad, P. (1987). The experience of illness: Recent and new directions. *Research in the Sociology of Health Care*, 6, 1-31.
- Corey, G. (1996). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Brooks/Cole.
- Cox, F. D. (1993). *Human Intimacy: Marriage, the Family and its Meaning* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: West Publishing Company.
- Croghan, R., & Miell, D. (1999). Born to abuse? Negotiation identity within an interpretative repertoire of impairment. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 38, 325-335.
- Cunningham, M. (2001). The influence of parental attitudes and behaviors on children's attitudes toward gender and household labor in early adulthood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63, 111-123.
- Dallos, R. (1991). *Family Belief Systems, Therapy and Change: A Constructional Approach*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.



- Dallos, R., & Aldridge, D. (1986). Change: How do we recognize it? *Journal of Family Therapy*, 8, 45-50.
- Dallos, R., & Aldridge, D. (1987). Handing it on: Family constructs, symptoms and choice. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 9, 39-58.
- Dallos, R., & Draper, R. (2000). *An Introduction to Family Therapy: Systemic Theory and Practice*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.
- Dallos, R., & Procter, H. G. (1984). *Family Processes*. Milton Keynes, UK: Open University Press.
- Deissler, K. (1987). Recursive creation of information: Circular questioning as information generation. Marburg, Germany: InFam.
- De Shazer, S. (1990). Brief therapy. In J. K. Zeig & W. M. Munion (Eds.), *What is Psychotherapy? Contemporary Perspectives* (pp. 278-282). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Deubner, R. (2000). Assessment of conflicts in smokers willing to quit. In J. W. Scheer (Ed.), *The Person in Society: Challenges to a Constructivist Theory* (pp. 340-350). Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag.
- DiLeo, J. (1977). *Child Development: Analysis and Synthesis*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Donnelly, M. (1992). Art therapy with families. In D. Waller & A. Gilroy (Eds.), *Art Therapy: A Handbook* (pp. 90-102). Buckingham, England: Open University Press.
- Dornbusch, S. M. (2000). Transitions from adolescence: A discussion of seven articles. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 15, 173-177.
- Downery, G., Purdie, V., & Schaffer-Neitz, R. (1999). Anger transmission from mother to child: A comparison of mothers in chronic pain and well mothers. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 62-73.
- Dreikers, R. (1949). Counseling for family adjustment. *Individual Psychology Bulletin*, 7, 119-137.
- Duncan, B., Parks, B., & Rush, G. (1990). Eclectic strategic practice: A process constructive perspective. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 16, 165-179.
- Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992). *Discursive Psychology*. London: Sage.
- Emanoil, P. (2000). Control Yourself! *Human Ecology*, 28, 8-11.
- Epstein, J. E. (1990). School and family connections: Theory research, and implications for integrating sociologies of education and family. *Marriage and the Family Review*, 15, 99-126.
- Erikson, E. (1950). *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton.
- Feder, E., & Feder, B. (1981). *The Expressive Arts Therapies: Art, Music and Dance as Psychotherapy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Feixas, G. (1990a). Approaching the individual, approaching the system: A constructivist model for integrative psychotherapy. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 4, 4-35.
- Feixas, G. (1990b). Personal construct theory and the systemic therapies: Parallel or convergent trends? *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 16, 1-20.

- Feixas, G. (1992). Personal construct approaches to family therapy. *Advances in Personal Construct Psychology*, 2, 215-255.
- Feixas, G., Procter, H. G., & Neimeyer, G. J. (1992). Constructivist assessment of couples and families. In G. J. Neimeyer (Ed.), *Casebook of Constructivist Assessment* (pp. 107-142). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Felmlee, D. H. (2001). No couple is an island: A social network perspective on dyadic stability. *Social Forces*, 79, 1259-1288.
- Ferguson, A. (1983). On conceiving motherhood and sexuality: A feminist materialist approach. In H. Trebilcock (Ed.), *Mothering: Essays in Feminist Theory* (pp. 153-184). Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Fincham, E. (1994). Understanding the association between marital conflict and child adjustment: Overview. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 8, 123-127.
- Fisher, P. A., Fagor, B. I., & Leve, C. S. (1998). Assessment of family stress across low-medium-and high-risk samples using the family events checklist. *Family Relations*, 47, 215-219.
- Flugel, J. (1921). *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Family*. London: Hogarth.
- Fransella, F. (2000). George Kelly and mathematics. In J. W. Scheer (Ed.), *The Person in Society: Challenges to a Constructivist Theory* (pp. 114-121). Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag.
- Freud, S. (1955). *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (Vol. 10)*. New York: Basic Books.
- Freud, S. (1958). *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Basic Books.
- Freud, S. (1962). *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality (Standard Edition, Vol. 7)*. London: Hogarth.
- Ganong, L. H., Coleman, M., & Mapes, D. (1990). A meta-analytic review of family structure stereotypes. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 52, 287-97.
- Gannon, K., & Zeedyk, S. (2001). Parenting: Concerns and motivations. *Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology*, 19, 93-94.
- Garai, J. E. (1987). A humanistic approach to art therapy. In J. A. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to Art Therapy: Theory and Techniques* (pp. 188-207). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Gattai, G. F., & Musatti, T. (1999). Grandmother's involvement in grandchildren's care: Attitudes, feelings, and emotions. *Family Relations*, 48, 35-43.
- Gergen, K. (1985). The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist*, 40, 266-275.
- Gil, E. (1994). *Play in Family Therapy*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Gilroy, A., & Lee, C. (Eds.). (1995). *Art and Music: Therapy and Research*. London: Routledge.
- Goldenberg, I. & Goldenberg, H. (1991). *Family Therapy: An Overview* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). California: Brooks/Cole.
- Goodenough, F. L. (1926). *Measurement of Intelligence by Drawings*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

- Grolnick, W., & Kurowski, C. (1999). Family processes and the development of children's self-regulation. *Educational Psychologist, 34*, 3-15.
- Halberstadt, A. G. (1986). Family socialization of emotional expression and nonverbal communication styles and skills. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 827-836.
- Halberstadt, A. G. (1991). Socialization of expressiveness: Family influences in particular and a model in general. In R. S. Feldman & B. Rime (Eds.), *Fundamentals in Nonverbal Behavior* (pp. 106-160). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hammersley, M. (1996). Evaluating qualitative research methods. In J.T.E Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences* (pp. 159-174). Leicester: British Psychological Association.
- Harris, E. B. (1963). *Children's Drawings as Measures of Intellectual Maturity: A Revision of the Goodenough Draw-a-Man Test*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.
- Hartley, R., Frank, L., & Goldenson, R. (1952). *Understanding Children's Play*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hartmann, D. P. (Ed.). (1982). *Using Observers to Study Behavior*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hatfield, G., Cacioppo, J. T., & Rapson, R. (1992). Primitive emotional contagion. In M. S. Clark (Ed.), *Review of Personality and Social Psychology, 14*, 151-177.
- Heynes, R.W., & Zander, A. F. (1953). Observation of group behaviour. In L. Festinger & D. Katz (Eds.), *Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 381-417). New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Hill, E. J., Hawkins, A. J., Ferris, M., & Weitzman, M. (2001). Finding an extra day a week: The positive influence of perceived job flexibility on work and family life balance. *Family Relations, 50*, 49-55.
- Hill, E. M., Ross, L. T., & Low, B. (1997). The role of future unpredictability in human risk-taking. *Human Nature, 8*, 287-325.
- Hobson, C. J., Delunas, L., & Kesic, D. (2001). Compelling evidence of the need for corporate work/life balance initiatives: Results from a national survey of stressful life events. *Journal of Employment Counseling, 38*, 38-75.
- Hubbard, J. A., & Cole, J. D. (1994). Emotional determinants of social competence in children's peer relationships. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 40*, 1-21.
- Inglehart, R. (1990). *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Jackson, D. D. (1957). The question of family homeostasis. *The Psychiatric Quarterly Supplement, 31*, 79-90.
- Jackson, D. D. (1959). Family interaction, family homeostasis, and some implications for conjoint family therapy. In J. Masseman (Ed.), *Individual and Family Dynamics* (pp. 125-138). New York: Grune & Stratton.
- Jackson, D. D. (1965). Family rules: Marital quid pro quo. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 12*, 589-594.

- Jenkins, J. M. (2000). Marital conflict and children's emotions: The development of an anger organization. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 723-737.
- Jung, C. G. (1970). *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Jung, C. G. (1983). *The Psychology of the Transference (Collected works, Vol. 16)*. London: Ark.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (1996). *Family and Human Development Across Cultures: A View From the Other Side*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Katz, L. G. (1996). Child development knowledge and teacher preparation: Confronting assumptions. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 11, 135-146.
- Kelly, G. A. (1955a). *The Psychology of Personal Constructs: Vol. 1. A Theory of Personality*. New York: Norton.
- Kelly, G. A. (1955b). *The Psychology of Personal Constructs: Vol. 2. Clinical Diagnosis and Psychotherapy*. New York: Norton.
- Kelly, G. A. (1979a). The autobiography of a theory. In B. Maher (Ed.), *Clinical Psychology and Personality: The Selected Papers of George Kelly* (pp. 46-65). New York: Krieger.
- Kelly, G. A. (1979b). Man's construction of his alternatives. In B. Maher (Ed.), *Clinical Psychology and Personality: The Selected Papers of George Kelly* (pp. 66-93). New York: Krieger.
- Kelly, G. A. (1979c). The psychotherapeutic relationship. In B. Maher (Ed.), *Clinical Psychology and Personality: The Selected Papers of George Kelly* (pp. 216-223). New York: Krieger.
- Kelly, G. A. (1979d). Hostility. In B. Maher (Ed.), *Clinical Psychology and Personality: The Selected Papers of George Kelly* (pp. 267-280). New York: Krieger.
- Kelly, G. A. (1979e). The threat of aggression. In B. Maher (Ed.), *Clinical Psychology and Personality: The Selected Papers of George Kelly* (pp. 281-288). New York: Krieger.
- Kerr, M. E., & Bowen, M. (1988). *Family Evaluation*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Klepsch, M., & Logie, L. (1982). *Children Draw and Tell: An Introduction to the Projective Uses of Children's Human Figure Drawings*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Klein, D. M., & White, J. M. (1996). *Family Theories: An Introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Knoff, H. M., & Prout, H. T. (1985). The kinetic drawing system: A review and integration of the Kinetic Family and School Drawing techniques. *Psychology in the Schools*, 22 (January), 50-59.
- Koppitz, E. M. (1984). *Psychological Evaluation of Children's Human Figure Drawings by Middle School Pupils*. Orlando, FL: Grune & Stratton.
- Korzybski, A. (1942). *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Lancaster, PA: Science Books.
- Kramer, E. (1971). *Art as Therapy with Children*. New York: Schocken Books.

- Kuersten-Hogan, R., & McHale, J. P. (2000). Stability of emotion talk in families from the toddler to the preschool years. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 161*, 115-122.
- Kwiatowska, H. Y. (1978). *Family Therapy and Evaluation Through Art*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Landgarten, H. (1993). *Magazine Photo Collage: A Multicultural Assessment and Treatment Technique*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Larson, R., & Almeida, D. M. (1999). Emotional transmission in couples under stress. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 5-20.
- Larson, R. W., & Gillman, S. (1999). Transmission of emotions in the daily interactions of single-mother families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 21-38.
- Lecuyer-Maus, E. A. (2000). Maternal sensitivity and responsiveness, limit-setting style, and relationship history in the transition to toddlerhood. *Issues in Pediatric Nursing, 23*, 150-170.
- Leibkind, K. (1996). Acculturation and stress: Vietnamese refugees in Finland. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 27*, 161-180.
- Lewis, M., & Goldberg, S. (1969). Perceptual-cognitive development in infancy: A generalized expectancy model as a function of the other-infant interaction. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 15*, 81-100.
- Lidz, T., Cornelison, A., Fleck, W., & Terry, D. (1957). The interfamilial environment of schizophrenic patients: II. Marital schism and marital skew. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 114*, 241-248.
- Luepnitz, D. A. (1988). *The Family Interpreted: Feminist Theory in Clinical Practice*. New York: Basic Books.
- MacDonald, R. (1985). The Hutterites in Alberta. In H. Palmer and T. Palmer (Eds.), *Peoples of Alberta: Portraits of Cultural Diversity*. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada: Western Producer Prairie Books.
- Machover, K. (1952). *Personality Projection in the Drawings of the Human Figure*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- Maher, B. (Ed.). (1979). *Clinical Psychology and Personality: The Selected Papers of George Kelly*. New York: Krieger.
- Mallick, J., & Watts, M. (2000). Spirituality and self: A case for drugs education. In J. W. Scheer (Ed.), *The Person in Society: Challenges to a Constructivist Theory* (pp. 281-289). Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag.
- Matheny, K. B., Aycock, D. W., Pugh, J. L., Curlette, W. L., & Canella, K. A. (1986). Stress coping: A qualitative and quantitative synthesis with implications for treatment. *The Counseling Psychologist, 14*, 499-549.
- McCulloch, M., & Scherman, A. (1998). Family of origin interaction and adolescent mother's potential for child abuse. *Adolescence, 33*, 375-475.
- McLanahan, S. S. (1997). Parent absence or poverty: Which matters more? In G. J. Duncan & J. Brooks Gunn (Eds.), *Consequences of Growing up Poor* (pp. 35-48). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- McNiff, S. (2000). *Art-Based Research*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- McWilliams, S. A. (2000). Core constructs and Ordinary Mind Zen. In J. W. Scheer (Ed.), *The Person in Society: Challenges to a Constructivist Theory* (pp. 261-271). Germany: Psychosozial-Verlag.
- Metsapelto, R., Pulkkiene, L., & Poikkeus, A. (2001). A search for parenting style: A cross-situational analysis of parental behavior. *Genetic, Social & General Psychology Monographs*, 127, 169-193.
- Mills, A., Cohen, B. M., & Meneses, J. Z. (1993). Reliability and Validity Tests of the Diagnostic Drawing Series. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 20, 83-88.
- Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and Family Therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Miranda, A. O., & Matheny, K. B. (2000). Socio-psychological predictors of acculturative stress among Latino adults. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 22, 306-317.
- Mitchell, J., Trent, R., & McArthur, R. (1994). *Human Figure Drawing test (HFDT): An Illustrated Handbook for Clinical Interpretation and Standardized Assessments of Cognitive Impairment*. Los Angeles: Western Psychological Services.
- Morrison, D. R., & Cherlin, A. J. (1995). The divorce process and young children's well-being: A prospective analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57, 800-812.
- Murdock, G. (1965). *Social Structure*. New York: Free Press.
- Nadeau, J. W. (1998). *Families Making Sense of Death*. London: Sage.
- Nairne, J. S. (2000). *Psychology: The Adaptive Mind* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.
- Nairne, J. S., Smith, M. S., & Lindsay, D. S. (2001). *Psychology: The Adaptive Mind* (1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Edition). Scarborough, Ontario, Canada: Nelson Thompson Learning.
- Napier, A. Y. (1994). Three approaches to couples therapy: Intergenerational gender-focussed therapy. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 17, 121-132.
- Naumburg, M. (1966). *Dynamically Oriented Art Therapy: Its Principles and Practices*. New York: Grune & Stratton.
- Neimeyer, R. (1988). Integrative directions in personal construct therapy. *International Journal of Personal Construct Psychology*, 1, 283-297.
- Neimeyer, R., & Neimeyer, G. (1985). Disturbed relationships: A personal construct view. In E. Button (Ed.), *Personal Construct Theory and Mental Health* (pp. 195-223). Beckenham, Kent: Croom Helm.
- Nevitte, N., & Kanji, M. (1999). Orientations towards authority and congruency theory. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 40, 161-191.
- Nichols, M. P. & Schwartz, R. C. (1995). *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Oberndorf, C. P. (1938). Psychoanalysis of married couples. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 25, 453-475.

- O'Hanlon, W. H., & Weiner-Davis, M. (1989). *In Search of Solutions: A New Direction in Psychotherapy*. New York: Norton.
- Oliver, K. (2000). Conflicted love. *Hypatia*, 15, 1-16.
- Olson, D. H., & DeFrain, J. (1994). *Marriage and the Family: Diversity and Strengths*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- Oster, G. D., & Montgomery, S. S. (1996). *Clinical Uses of Drawings*. New Jersey: Jason Aronson.
- Palazzoli, M. S., Boscolo, L., Cecchin, G., & Prada, G. (1980). Hypothesizing-circularity-neutrality: Three guidelines for the conductor of the session. *Family Process*, 19, 2-3.
- Parker, J. G., & Asher, S. R. (1987). Peer relations and later personal adjustment: Are low-accepted children at risk? *Psychological Bulletin*, 102, 357-389.
- Perls, F., Hefferline, R., & Goodman, P. (1951). *Gestalt Therapy Integrated: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality*. New York: Dell.
- Piaget, J. (1954). *The Construction of Reality in the Child*. New York: Basic Books.
- Pidgeon, N. (1996). Grounded theory: Theoretical background. In J. T. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences* (pp. 75-86). Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- Plager, K. A. (1999). Understanding family legacy in family health concerns. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 5, 51-52.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative Knowing and Human Sciences*. New York: Albany State University of New York Press.
- Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour*. London: Sage.
- Prinstein, M. J., & La Greca, A. M. (1999). Links between mothers' and children's social competence and associations with maternal adjustment. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 28, 197-211.
- Prinzhorn, H. (1972). *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*. New York: Spriger-Verlag.
- Procter, H. G. (1978). *Personal Construct Theory and the Family: A Theoretical and Methodological Study*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Bristol, UK.
- Procter, H. G. (1981). Family construct psychology: An approach to understanding and treating families. In S. Walrond-Skinner (Ed.), *Developments in Family Therapy* (pp. 350-366). London: Routledge.
- Procter, H. G. (1985a). A construct approach to family therapy and systems intervention. In E. Button (Ed.), *Personal Construct Theory and Mental Health: Theories, Research and Practice* (pp. 327-350). London: Croom Helm.

- Procter, H. G. (1985b). Repertory grids in family therapy and research. In N. Beail (Ed.), *Repertory Grid Technique and Personal Constructs: Applications in Clinical and Educational Settings* (pp. 218-239). London: Croom Helm.
- Procter, H. G. (1996). The family construct system. In D. Kalekin-Fishman & B. M. Walker (Eds.), *The Construction of Group Realities: Culture, Society, and Personal Construct Theory* (pp. 161-180). Malabar, FL: Krieger.
- Putallaz, M. (1987). Maternal behavior and children's sociometric status. *Child Development*, 58, 324-340.
- Pyke, K. (1999). The micropolitics of care in relationships between aging parents and adult children: Individualism, collectivism and power. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 661-673.
- Pyke, K., & Bengston, V.L. (1996). Caring more or less: Individualistic and collectivist systems of family elder care. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 379-392.
- Ravenette, T. (1999). *Personal Construct Theory in Educational Psychology: A Practitioner's View*. London: Whurr.
- Riley, S., & Malchiodi, C. A. (1994). *Integrative Approaches to Family Therapy*. Chicago: Magnolia Street Publishers.
- Roeer-Strier, D., & Rosenthal, M. (2001). Socialization in changing cultural contexts: A search for images of the 'Adaptive Adult.' *Social Work*, 46, 215-229.
- Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client-Centered Therapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Rollins, M. (2000). *Mental Imagery: On the Limits of Cognitive Science*. London: Yale University Press.
- Rosenthal, D. A. & Bornholt, L. (1988). Expectations about development in Greek and Anglo-Australian families. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 19, 19-34.
- Rosenthal, D., Ramieri, N., & Klimidis, S. (1996). Vietnamese adolescents in Australia: Relationships between perceptions of self and parental values, intergenerational conflict, and gender dissatisfaction. *International Journal of Psychology*, 31, 81-91.
- Roth, E. A. (1987). A behavioural approach to art therapy. In J. A. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to Art Therapy: Theory and Techniques* (pp. 213-232). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Rotter, J. C. (2000). Family grief and mourning. *The Family Journal: Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 8, 275-277.
- Rubin, J. A. (Ed.) (1987). *Approaches to Art Therapy: Theory and Techniques*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Sam, D. L. (2000). Psychological adaptation of adolescents with immigrant backgrounds. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 140, 5-26.
- Satir, V. M. (1964). *Conjoint Family Therapy*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books.
- Scanzoni, J., Polonko, K., Teachman, J., & Thompson, L. (1989). *The Sexual Bond: Rethinking Families and Close Relationships*. California: Sage.



- Scheer, J. W. (2000). Construing Berlin. In J. W. Scheer (Ed.), *The Person in Society: Challenges to a Constructivist Theory* (pp. 44-53). Germany: Psychosozial-Verlaag.
- Schindler, W. (1951). Counter-transference in family-pattern group psychotherapy. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 1, 100-105.
- Schwartz, J. A., Kaslow, N. J., Seeley, J., & Lewinsohn, P. (2000). Psychological, cognitive, and interpersonal correlates of attributional change in adolescents. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 29, 188-198.
- Seale, C. (1999). *The Quality of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Seligman, M.E.P. (1975). *Helplessness: On Depression, Development, and Death*. San Francisco; W.H. Freeman.
- Selvini-Palazzoli, M., Boscolo, L., Cecchin, G., & Prata, G. (1978). *Paradox and Counterparadox*. New York: Aronson.
- Sharf, R. S. (2000). *Theories of Psychotherapy and Counselling: Concepts and Cases* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Scarborough, Ontario, Canada: Brooks/Cole.
- Silver, R. A. (1987). A cognitive approach to art therapy. In J. A. Rubin (Ed.), *Approaches to Art Therapy: Theory and Techniques* (pp. 233-250). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. London: Sage.
- Slavson, S. R. (1964). *A Textbook in Analytic Group Psychotherapy*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Smith, J. A. (1991). Conceiving selves: A case study of hanging identities during the transition to motherhood. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 10, 225-243.
- Smith, J. A. (1994). Reconstructing selves: An analysis of discrepancies between women's contemporaneous and retrospective accounts of the transition to motherhood. *British Journal of Psychology*, 85, 371-392.
- Smith, J. A. (1996). Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: Using interpretive phenomenological analysis in health psychology. *Psychology and Health*, 11, 261-271.
- Smith, J. K. (1986). Closing down the conversation: The end of the quantitative-qualitative debate among educational inquirers. *Educational Researcher*, 15, 4-12.
- Smith, J. A., Harre, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (Eds.) (1995). *Rethinking Methods in Psychology*. London: Sage.
- Smith, A., Jarman, M., & Osborne, M. (1996). Doing interpretative phenomenological Analysis. In M. Murray & K. Chamberlain (Eds.), *Qualitative Health Psychology: Theories and Methods* (pp. 218-240). London: Sage.
- Softas-Nall, B. C., Baldo, T. D., & Tiedermann, T. R. (1999). A gender-based solution focussed genogram case: He and she across the generations. *The Family Journal of Counseling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 7, 177-180.
- Stiles, W. B. (1993). Quality control in qualitative research. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 13, 593-618.
- Strachey, J. (Ed.). (1963). *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis Part II: Dreams Vol. XV*. London: Hogarth Press.

- Sullivan, H. S. (1953). *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Sun, Y. (2001). Family environment and adolescents' well-being before and after parents' marital disruption: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63, 697-714.
- Taylor, C. (1991). *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, C. (1994). The politics of recognition. In A. Gutman (Ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (pp. 25-73). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Thompson, A. T., & Bolger, N. (1999). Emotional transmission in couples under stress. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 61, 38-48.
- Thompson, R. L., & Hill, E. M. (2000). The family unpredictability scale: Reliability and validity. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 549-563.
- Toren, C. (1996). Ethnography: Theoretical background. In J. T. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Method for Psychology and the Social Sciences* (pp. 102-112). Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- Wadeson, H. (1980). *Art Psychotherapy*. New York: John Wiley & Son.
- Ward, M. (1994). *The Family Dynamic: A Canadian Perspective*. Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson Canada.
- Watzlawick, P. (1984). *The Invented Reality*. New York: Norton.
- Watzlawick, P., Weakland, J. H., & Fisch, R. (1974). *Change: Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution*. New York: Norton.
- White, L. (2001). Sibling relationships over the life course: A panel analysis. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63, 555-568.
- White, L. K. (1990). Determinants of divorce: A review of research in the eighties. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 52, 904-912.
- White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*. New York: Norton.
- Williams, G., & Wood, M. (1977). *Developmental Art Therapy*. Baltimore: University Park Press.
- Woolgar, S. (1996). Psychology, qualitative methods and the ideas of science. In J. T. E. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences* (pp. 11-24). Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- Yalom, I. D. (1999). *Momma and the Meaning of Life: Tales of Psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books.
- Yeung, W. J., Sandbreg, J. F., Davis-Kean, P. E., & Hofferth, S. L. (2001). Children's time with fathers in intact families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 63, 136-155.
- Zabriskie, R. B. (2001). The influences of family leisure patterns on perceptions of family functioning. *Family Relations*, 50, 281-290.

## APPENDIX A

### Research Participant's Consent Form

I acknowledge that I am voluntarily participating in a research project, which will include drawing and explaining pictures for use in a thesis research project of Lucille Giles.

I acknowledge that the art I make in this project is my property but that I will store it with Lucille Giles, who will treat it with care and respect while it is in her possession. I agree that Lucille may use my illustrations and descriptions thereof in her thesis as well as works related to it, e.g. professional journals, seminars etc.

I understand that information acquired in this research will be confidential in that identifying information will not be made public to anyone other than Lucille Giles or her research assistants.

I am aware that I may reserve my participation in this research at any time and that Lucille has offered counseling sessions to me and my family should personal issues arise as an outcome of this research. These sessions would occur with her over a reasonable amount of time and would be free of charge.

I also give my permission for my children to participate in this research under the conditions noted above.

DATE:

NAMES:

WITNESS:

## APPENDIX B

Table B5.1. *Thompson Family's Construals in Clinic Drawings and Behaviours*

Elements			
Perceiver	Father	Nancy	Family
Father	Desires satisfaction. Showing emotions now. Responsible for marriage break-up. Uncertain about his daughters' opportunities. Playing the role. Only one who left his family. Has the final choice. Is proud of his country. Needs to look after Nancy. As being in his bio family with his daughters in mind.	One of the most important people in his life. Having opportunities he didn't have. Being happy. Being as smart as him. Being close physically to mom when Nancy was a baby. Been through enough already. Getting in his space.	As his bio family that is adjusting, unsatisfied, sad, well educated, etc. As his bio family and his two daughters. As having two daughters who will have opportunities, thanks to him. As being in his father's shade.
Nancy	Has to give her permission. On her team. A good goalie who can stop shots from getting in.	Can tease her dad. Is taken with dad. Is smart and very artistic. Good at languages. Involved in activities. Doesn't like her name. Is scoring a goal. Loves Sally. On same team as dad. Same height as mom. Dresses and influences her mom. Stands up to dad. Next to her mom but in competition with her. Determined to score against Sally.	Happy. Includes Sally. Can all picnic together. Confused. Divided. Has everyone away from Sally.

Table B5.2. *Analysis of Thompson Family's Construals in Clinic Drawings and Behaviours*

Perceiver	Analysis
Father	authority in the family playing roles proud of his heritage committed to daughters' opportunities showing emotions identifies with biological family striving for success
Nancy	has opportunities creative determined seeking clarification of family able to express feelings and ideas nurturing
Family	future oriented inclusive happy changing

Table B5.3. *Emergent Constructs of Thompson Family's Construals in Clinic Drawings and Behaviours*

Emergent Constructs		
Presented to family	Amended by family	Created by family
Future oriented	Future oriented – it's the only way out	
Inclusive	Inclusive, connected to extended family including Sally	
Happy	Happy, focussed on making the best of life	
Changing	Wanting and needing to change, motivated to be unlike father's biological family	
		Father is caring and considerate

Table B5.4. *Legend for Scale Analysis of Family Constructs*

Elements	Explanations
Scale	1-4
E(1)	Indicates emergent pole of the family construct (always scored 1)
S(4)	Indicates submergent pole of the family construct (always scored 4)
Across Row	Rows indicate each family member's opinion of how they and the other members of the family see the family (e.g., Father thinks that father sees the family as..., thinks that Daughter sees the family as...)
Down Column	Columns indicate how each individual in the family is viewed by each member of the family (e.g. Daughter is viewed by Father to see the family as..., Daughter is viewed by herself to see the family as...)
Individual's Placement of Family	This score indicates each family member's view of how they think the collective family sees itself on the particular construct (e.g., Father thinks all the family members all view the family on the emergent side). Individual's scores for each family member are added and divided by the total number of family members.
Family's Placement of Family	This score indicates where the family collectively views itself on the particular construct (e.g., the family as a group thinks all the family members all view the family on the emergent side). This number is a total of the scores given to each family member by all the other family members and themselves, divided by the total number of the members in the family squared (e.g., total of 28 is divided by 3 family members squared = 3.1).
Family's Placement of Individuals	This score indicates the family's collective view of where it thinks each individual sees themselves viewing the family on the particular construct. This number represents the collective score given to each individual by all members of the family (e.g., Father's column: if Father's Family Placement of Individual's score is 3.50, it indicates that he is seen to view the family unit as being strongly on the submergent side of the construct).

Table B5.5. *Thompson Family Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 1*

Perceivers	Elements		Placements		
	Father	Nancy	Individual's Placement of Family	Family's Placement of Individuals	Family's Placement of Family
Father	1.00	2.00	1.50	1.00	
Nancy	1.00	2.00	1.50	2.00	
Family					1.50

*Note.* E (1): Wanting and needing to change, motivated to be unlike father's bio family  
S (4): Indolent, lazy, afraid of new changes

Table B5.6. *Thompson Family Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 2*

Perceivers	Elements		Placements		
	Father	Nancy	Individual's Placement of Family	Family's Placement of Individuals	Family's Placement of Family
Father	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.50	
Nancy	2.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	
Family					1.25

*Note.* E (1): Future oriented – it's the only way out  
S (4): Motionless, repeating mistakes from the past

Table B5.7 *Thompson Family Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 3*

Perceivers	Elements		Placements		
	Father	Nancy	Individual's Placement of Family	Family's Placement of Individuals	Family's Placement of Family
Father	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Nancy	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Family					1.00

*Note.* E (1): Inclusive, connected to extended family including Sally  
S (4): It wouldn't be a family, no sense of belonging

Table B5.8 Thompson Family Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 4

Perceivers	Elements		Placements		
	Father	Nancy	Individual's Placement of Family	Family's Placement of Individuals	Family's Placement of Family
Father	2.00	.00	2.00	2.00	
Nancy	2.00	1.00	1.50	1.50	
Family					1.75

Note. E (1): Father is caring and considerate  
S (4): Not connected to each other

Table B5.9. Thompson Family Placements of Each Other and Family on 1-4 Scale for Construct 5

Perceivers	Elements		Placements		
	Father	Nancy	Individual's Placement of Family	Family's Placement of Individuals	Family's Placement of Family
Father	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Nancy	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
Family					2.00

Note. E (1): Happy, focussed on making the best of life  
S (4): Unsatisfied, weak, fighting, sad



Table B5.10. *Thompson Family's Associations, Constructs and Preliminary Themes*

Associations	Constructs	Preliminary Themes
Emergent Constructs		
(E1) Wanting and Needing to Change, Motivated to be Unlike Father's Bio Family		
Needing to change Not to be like his dad		E1 change needed E1 change means "to be unlike bio family"
Thinking of life with new woman		E1 change needed for self-image, pride, fear
(E2) Future Oriented – It's the Only Way Out		
Future oriented Where he's at now, but with lots of worries		E2 future unclear
Thinking of woman		E2 future only way
Soon to have PhD Definitely not like his dad		E2 very unlike dad's dad
Nancy buying into this, but with worries, too (who will she live with?)		E2 daughter on dad's bandwagon re future
(E3) Inclusive, Connected to Extended Family, including Sally		
Inclusive Connected to extended family How his new life in home country is becoming		E3 wants new kind of family – both agree
Not like father's own family: could not visit dad's relatives, but would go to mom's Daughter likes this idea of a big family Family is important to father and daughter This would be a new life, but somewhat similar to 1 <sup>st</sup> marriage?		E3 want differences from dad's bio family
(E4) Father is Caring and Considerate		
Father is soft A new self-image for dad (says he wasn't this way before) Daughter is caring/a fixer		E4 Dad wants a new self-image – a caring one – both agree it should happen
(E5) Happy, Focussed on Making the Best of Life		
Happy Focussed on best Fairly new for dad since marital separation (same for daughter)		E5 both have ideas for a new family E5 both want new family to be different from dad's bio family

Table B5.10. *Thompson Family's Associations, Constructs and Preliminary Themes*

Associations	Constructs	Preliminary Themes
		E5 both want new family to be different from dad's bio family
	Submergent Constructs	
	(S1) Indolent, Lazy, Afraid of New Changes	
Worried of being like dad		
Connected to dad?		
Slothful, lazy		
Indolent (interesting to me that dad knew this unusual English word -- adamant about it -- an important word to dad		S1 dad has worries about himself not being lazy like his dad
Like dad's dad, mom and entire bio family		S1 dad wants to be different from his bio family
Like dad (Robert) had been over divorce		S1 thoughts still on divorce
Unhappy		
Dad doesn't want unhappiness, nor does daughter		S1 dad has worries about his daughter S1 guilty feelings re divorce
Dad would be aimless – he wants direction		
He's desperate to have happiness, direction (his dad didn't)		S1 life depends on future planning
Hard to have, right now		
No goals or plans		S1 both need plans right now
Fearful of being like dad		S1 fears surround dad's image of himself/not to be like his dad S1 dad doesn't want to be like his dad in business affairs
Doesn't want changes		
There are a lot of unknowns; what are they?		
Work, woman, Nancy?		S1 fear of future S1 future unnamed and mostly undiscussed
Afraid of new changes		S1 future unclear
Not wanting to leave known situations		
After PhD?		
Fear of future		S1 fear of future
Has to leave!		S1 is propelled into future S1 shows reluctance about propulsion into future S1 has to go into future
	(S2) Motionless, Repeating Mistakes from the Past	
Standing still		
Fear of not going forward		
Like his drawing of family picture		

Table B5.10. *Thompson Family's Associations, Constructs and Preliminary Themes*

Associations	Constructs	Preliminary Themes
Would be like dad No woman, 2 <sup>nd</sup> daughter		S2 fear of standing still S2 fear of focussing on future S2 fear of being like bio dad
Complicated...dad says he's like his dad, too lonely, unsatisfied		S2 determined not to be like dad  S2 family must get satisfaction S2 must be with people and connected (fear is propelling this)
Fear of not succeeding Like his dad No goals Dad (Robert) has academic goals right now - doesn't mention any others		S2 present is comfortable S2 no real mention of future goals S2 future unclear
Fear of not succeeding Would be like his dad		S2 fear of standing still S2 fear of being like dad
Dad pushes daughter to achieve		S2 dad needs daughter to be like him in his achievements, goals, everything S2 dad puts his values on his daughter S2 dad feels responsible for his daughter S2 a new future for daughter is the only way for her, too
No plans for the future Dad would stand still if no plans; has to keep going		S2 needs plans for future or would be like his dad
Repeating mistakes from the past Fears he'll lose a future relationship Will be like his bio family		S2 future will be dad's salvation S2 a new life will mean he's not like his bio family S2 a new life, with him being different from his bio dad will also mean he'll do better in a new relationship
(S3) It wouldn't be a Family, no Sense of Belonging		
It wouldn't be a family Dad and daughter want a family Dad's bio family wasn't inclusive: dad (Robert) didn't see it as a family		S3 a new, big family wanted S3 a new definition of family needed
No contact Fear of isolation within and out of family - like in his bio family		

Table B5.10. *Thompson Family's Associations, Constructs and Preliminary Themes*

Associations	Constructs	Preliminary Themes
Fear of isolation within and out of family – like in his bio family		S3 fear of being alone - which would mean not being alive/growing S3 fear of being like bio family
No sense of belonging Wants to belong, be together		S3 future means togetherness S3 both need to feel connected
	(S4) Not Connected to Each Other	
Being disconnected not good Would be like bio family		S4 no bio family wanted
Dad's working at connectedness right now (in his native country)		S4 both are working to be unlike bio family
	(S5) Unsatisfied, weak, fighting and sad	
Unsatisfied Would be like bio dad		S5 cannot be unsatisfied = they'd be like his bio dad
Negative Would lead to trouble This is a huge fear of dad (Robert)		S5 fear of dissatisfaction
Sadness Would be like bio family Like dad (Richard) since his divorce dad's (Robert) sadness is remorse, too Daughter's been sad, knows mom's been sad		S5 fear of sadness S5 fear of bio dad's characteristics S5 bio family life = sadness S5 present divorce in life = sadness S5 both dad and daughter have been sad
Unhappy Life after divorce		S5 fear of divorce
Weak Like his dad Wouldn't be a man		S5 fear of weakness S5 if you're weak, you're not a man S5 bio dad was weak S5 making changes is strength
Loneliness		S5 loneliness is like the bio dad

Table B5.11. *Thompson Family's General and Preliminary Themes*

General Themes	Construct No.	Preliminary Themes
Connection to Family of Origin	S1 dad has worries about himself not being lazy like his dad S2 fear of being like bio dad S2 determined not to be like bio dad S2 fear of being like bio dad S2 fear of being like dad S2 needs plans for the future or would be like bio dad S3 no big family in bio family S5 cannot be unsatisfied – they'd be like bio dad S5 unsatisfaction = bad/negative S5 fear of bio dad's characteristics S5 bio family life = sadness S5 present divorce in life = sadness S5 both dad and daughter have been sad S5 fighting not mentionable S5 fear of weakness S5 if you're weak, you're not a man S5 bio dad was weak S5 loneliness is like the bio dad	
Concerns of Present Family	E2 daughter on dad's bandwagon re the future S2 dad has worries about his daughter S1 dad's thoughts still on divorce S1 dad feels guilty about divorce S1 fears surround dad's image of himself – not to be like his ad S2 fear of standing still S2 family must get satisfaction S2 must be with people and connect S2 present is comfortable S2 dad needs daughter to be like him in his achievements, goals, everything S2 dad feels responsible for his daughter S2 dad puts his values on his daughter S2 a new future for daughter is the only way for her, too S3 both need to feel connected S4 both are working to be unlike bio family S5 present divorce in life = sadness S5 fighting not mentionable S5 daughter mentions fighting	
Prospect of Change	E1 change needed E1 change needed for self-image, pride, fear E1 change means "to be unlike bio family" E3 want new kind of family – both agree E3 want differences from dad's bio family E4 dad wants a new self image – a caring one both agree it should happen E5 both have ideas for a new family E5 both want new family to be different from dad's bio family S1 dad has worries about his daughter S1 dad wants to be different from his bio family S1 life depends on future planning	

Table B5.11. *Thompson Family's General and Preliminary Themes*

General Themes	Construct	
	No.	Preliminary Themes
The Future		S1 both need plans right now S1 shows reluctance about propulsion into future S2 present is comfortable S2 a new life will mean he's not like his bio family S2 a new life, with him being different from his bio dad will also mean he'll do better in a new relationship S3 a new definition of family needed S4 both are working to be unlike bio family S5 making changes is strength
		E2 future unclear E2 future only way out E2 very unlike dad's dad E2 daughter on dad's bandwagon re the future S1 dad has worries about himself not being lazy like his dad S1 fears surround dad's image of himself – not to be like his dad S1 dad doesn't want to be like his dad in business affairs S1 fear of future S1 future unnamed and mostly undiscussed S1 future is unclear S1 is being propelled into the future S1 has to go into future S2 family must get satisfaction S2 must be with people and connect S2 fear of having to be with people and Connecting S2 must focus on future S2 fear of focussing on future S2 fear of being like bio dad S2 no real mention of future goals S2 future unclear S2 fear of standing still S2 fear of being like dad S2 dad needs daughter to be like him in his S2 needs plans for the future or would be like bio dad S2 future will be dad's salvation S3 fear of being alone – which would mean not being alive/growing S2 a new future for daughter is the only way for her, too S3 a new, big family wanted S3 future means togetherness S3 both need to feel connected S4 no bio family wanted S5 cannot be unsatisfied – they'd be like bio dad S5 fear of unsatisfaction S5 fear of sadness S5 fear of bio dad's characteristics S3 fear of being like bio family S5 fear of a divorce S5 fear of weakness

Table B5.12. *Thompson Family's General Themes and Issues*

General Themes	Issues
Connection to Family of Origin	<p>The past: dad has fears of being like his bio dad, who was weak, lazy, lonely, unsatisfied, and sad, with no plans for the future.</p> <p>The present: both have worries of crossing over into their present life because dad is divorced, sad and lonely.</p>
Concerns of Present Family	<p>The daughter: both wonder if her life today predicts she'll be with dad in the future? Does she have dad's values and goals, etc.?</p> <p>The dad: he worries that his present family is like his bio-family, which was non-connected, standing still, sad and fighting.</p> <p>Dad has guilt over divorce.</p>
Prospect of Change	<p>Change is needed now: new images for self, family and relationships.</p> <p>Change is strength.</p> <p>Change must incorporate dad and daughter.</p> <p>Change is difficult.</p> <p>Today is comfortable.</p>
The Future	<p>Future is fearful and undiscussed.</p> <p>Future is necessary.</p> <p>Future must be different from dad's bio family.</p> <p>Future family must be a big, extended family and include dad's two daughters.</p>



Figure B6.1. Thompson family: Spontaneous drawing by Nancy "untitled"

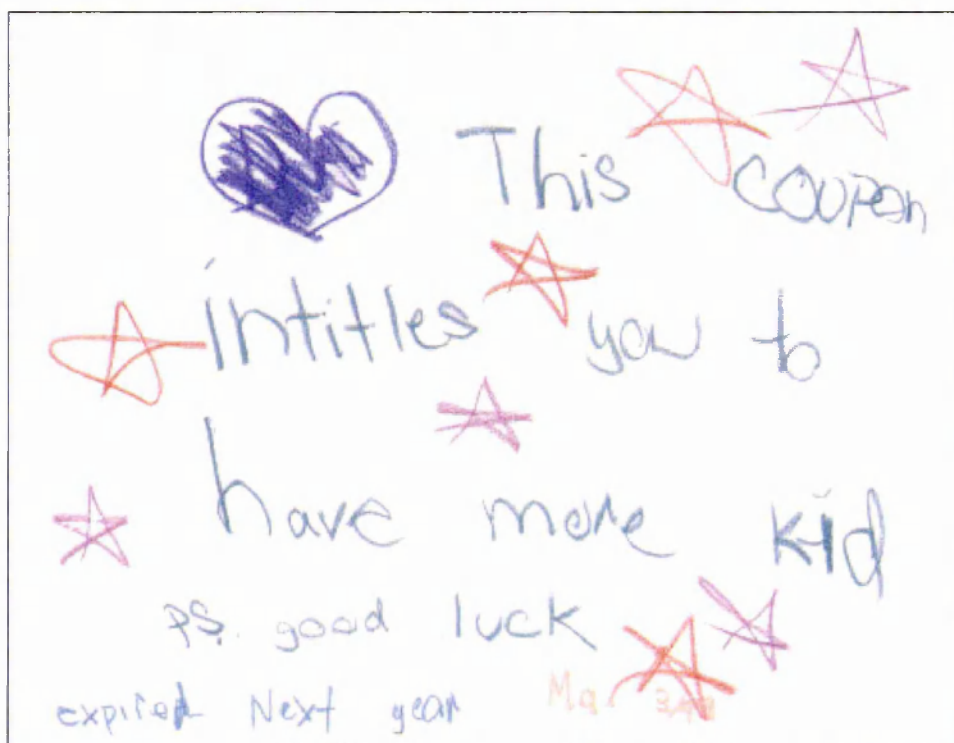


Figure B6.2. Thompson family: Spontaneous drawing by Nancy "untitled"



## APPENDIX C

---

Table C6.1. *Means of Family Placement Scores on Shared Family Construct 1-4 Scales*

---

Thompson	1.50
Robertson	1.27
Gibson	1.66
Ball	2.50
Whitney	2.42
Rosen	2.80
Williams	2.22
Badgley	2.33
Samson	1.56
Langdon	1.95

---

Across-families	1.55
-----------------	------

---

## APPENDIX D

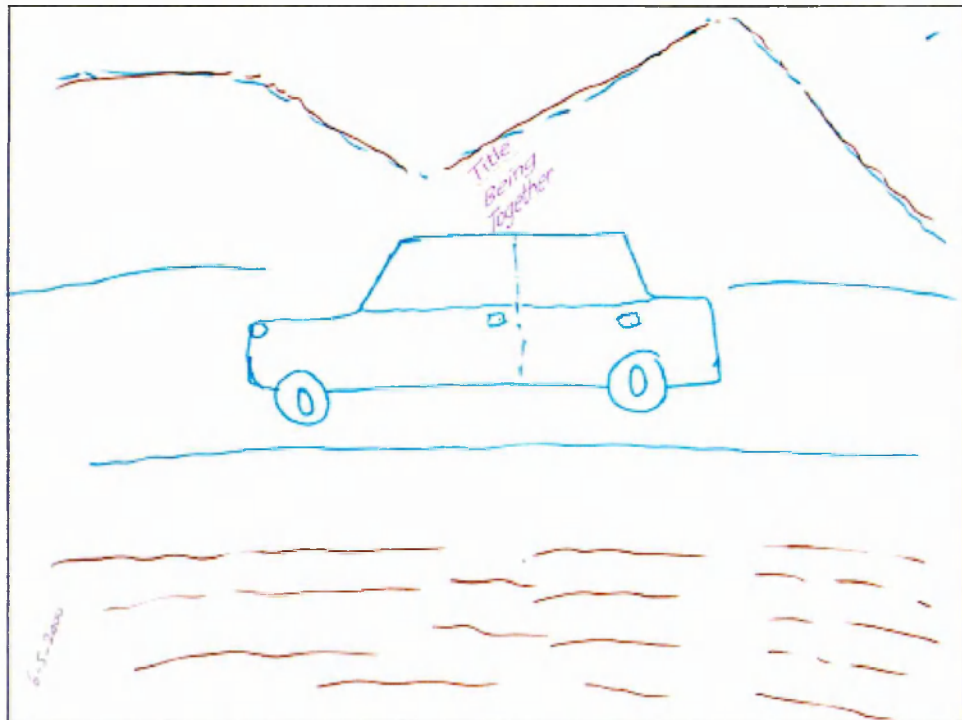


Figure D6.1. Gibson family: Family drawing by Father entitled "Being Together"

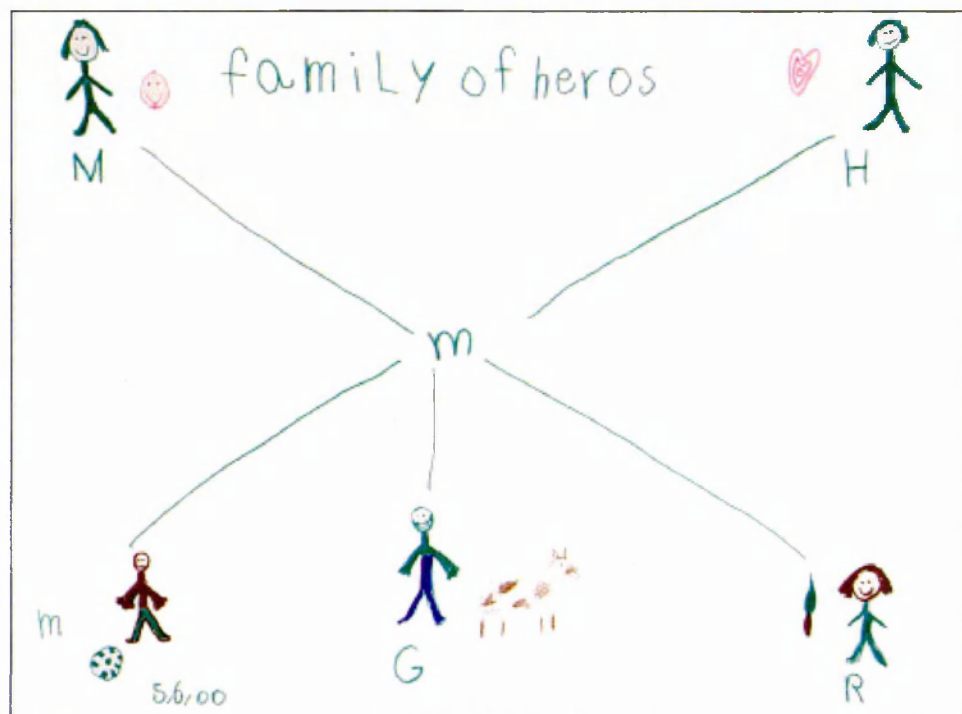


Figure D6.2. Gibson family: Family drawing by Matt entitled "Family of Heros"

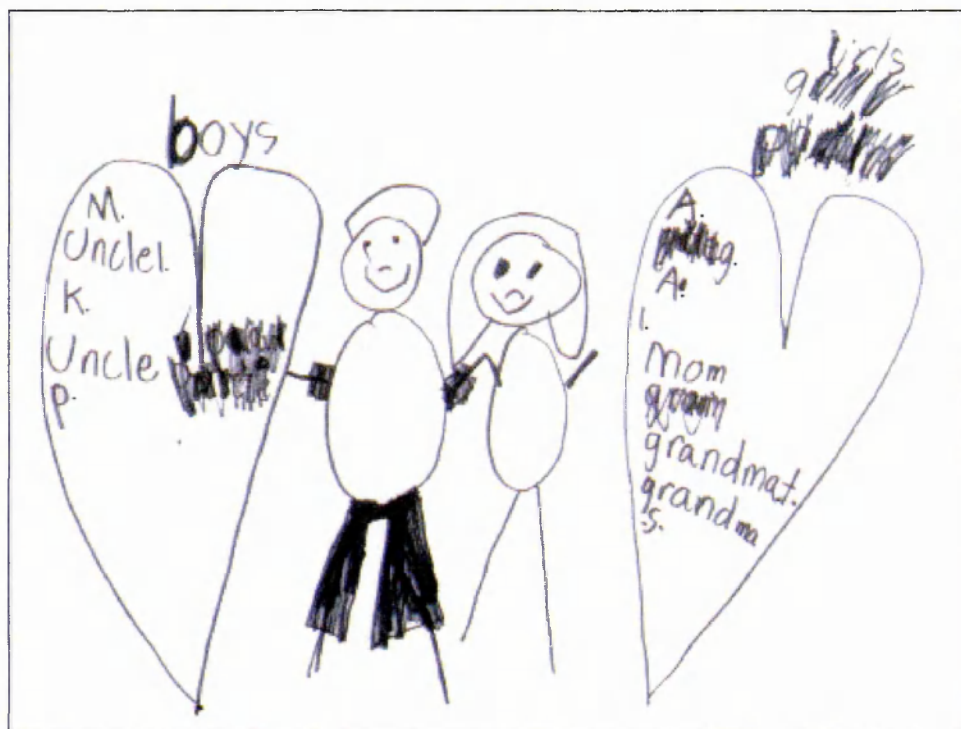


Figure D6.3. Ball family: Spontaneous drawing by Charlene "untitled"

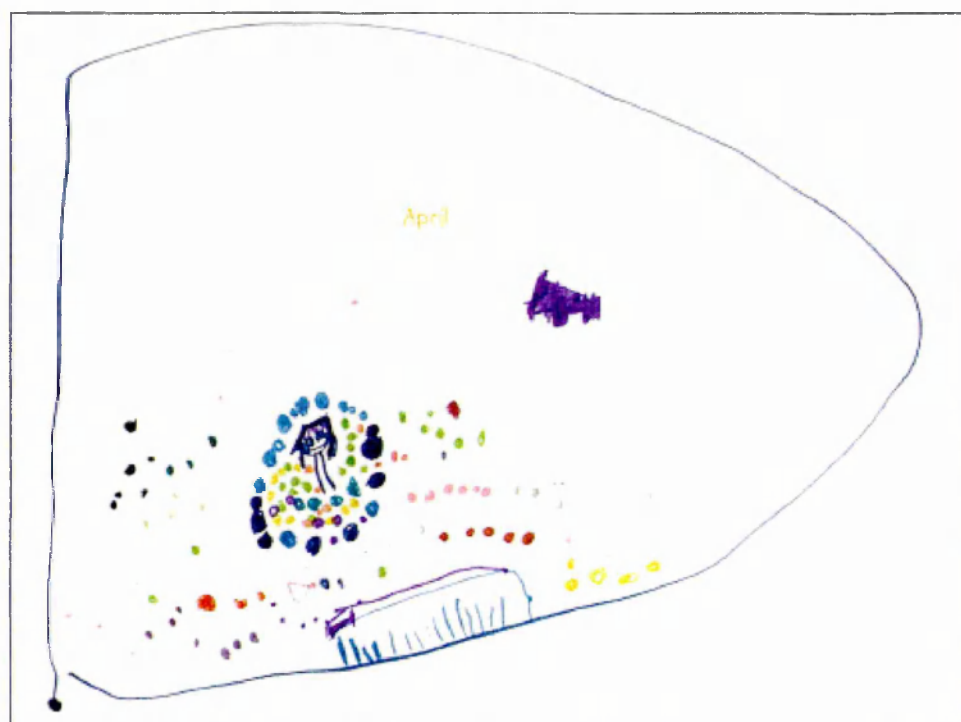


Figure D6.4. Rosen family: Family drawing by April entitled "Family"

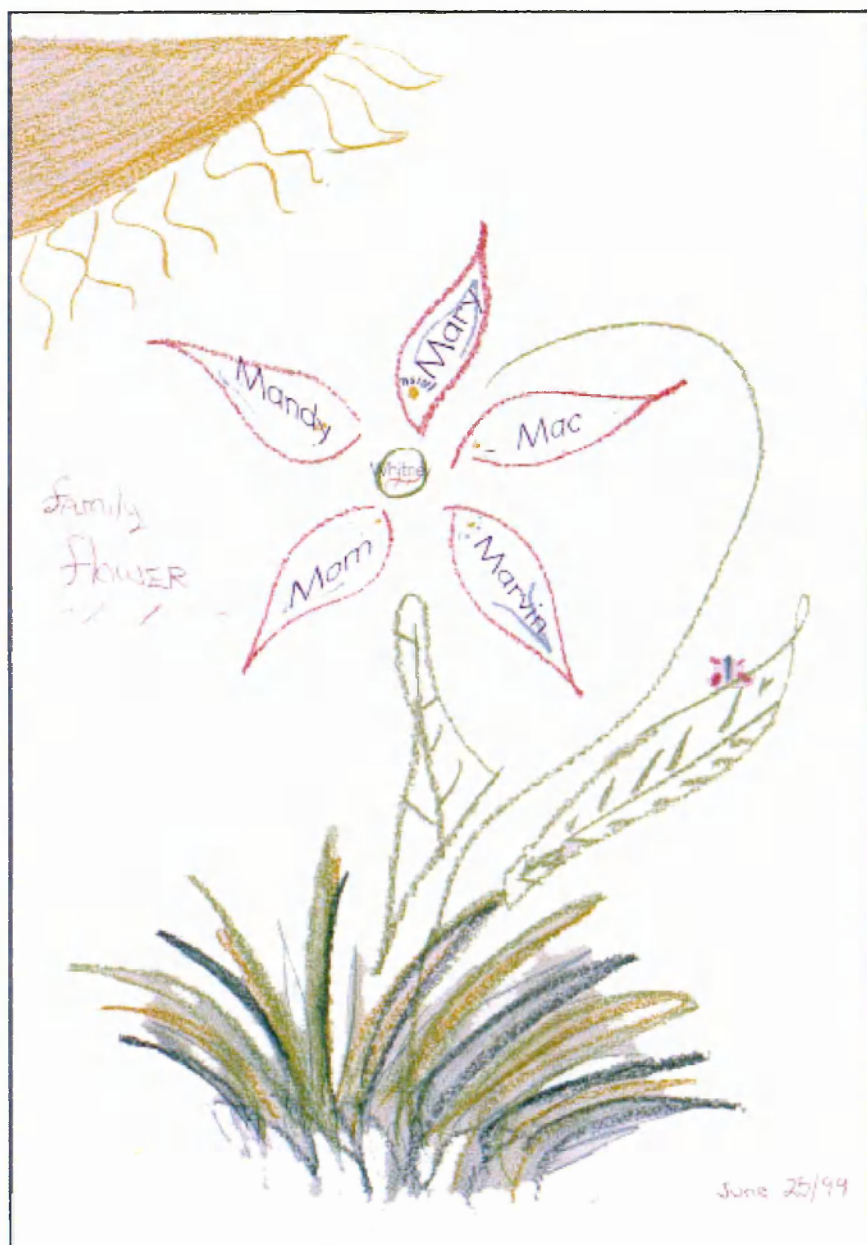


Figure D6.5. Whitney family: Family drawing by Mandy entitled "Family Flower"

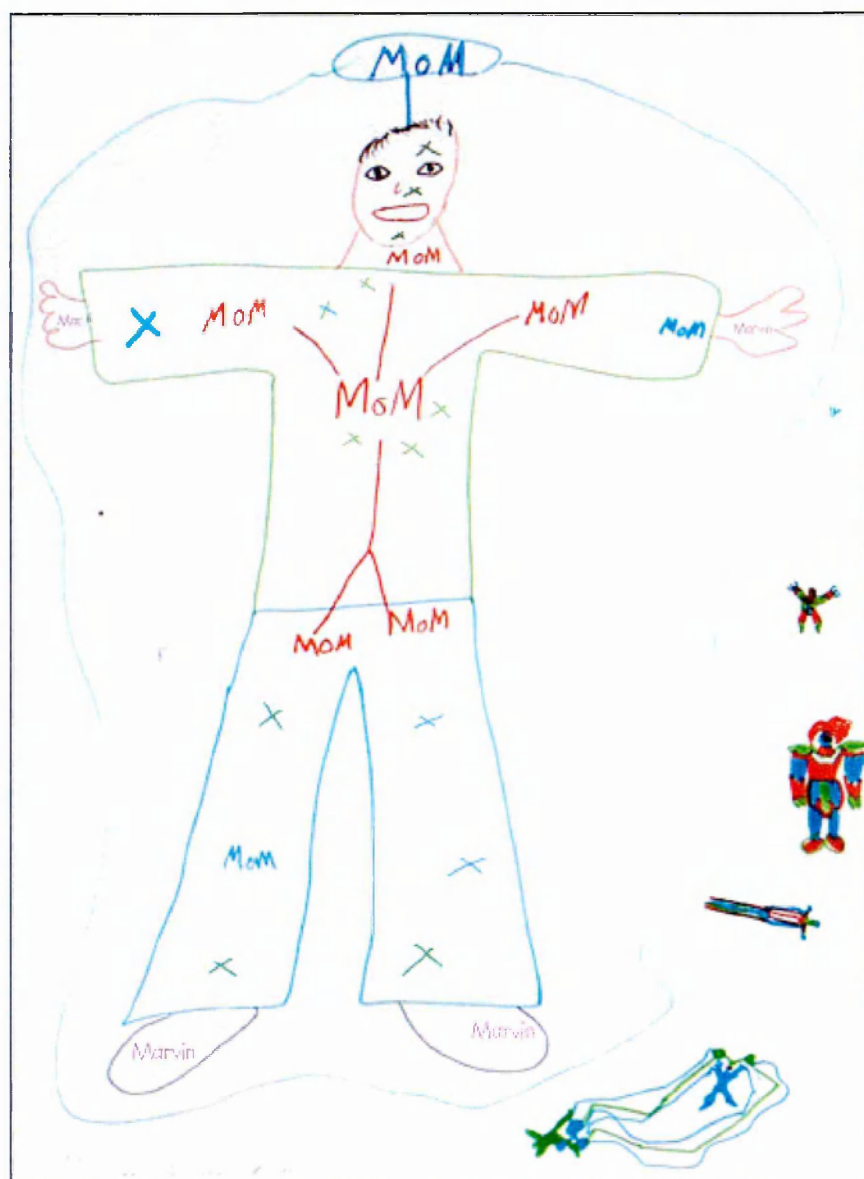


Figure D6.6. Whitney family: Family drawing by Matt entitled "Body and Soul"



Figure D6.7. Badgley family: Family drawing by Carson entitled “Family Picture”



Figure D6.8. Samson family: Family drawing by Hedy entitled “Gidiup”



## APPENDIX E

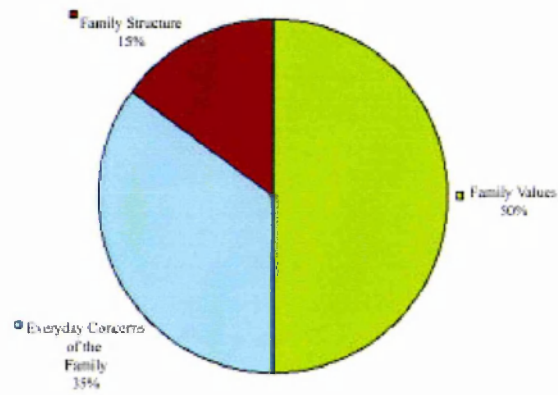


Figure E6.1. Percentages of major family themes in Robertson family

---

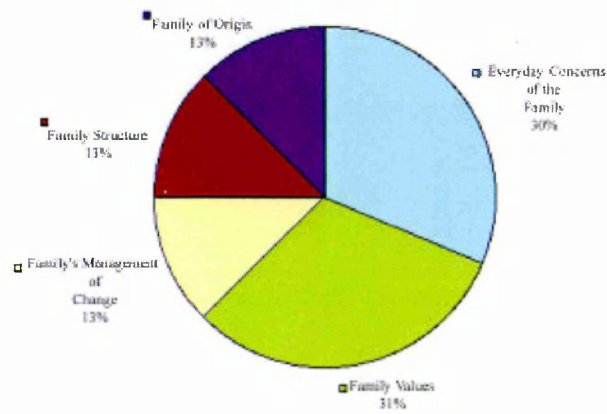


Figure E6.2. Percentages of major family themes in Gibson family

---

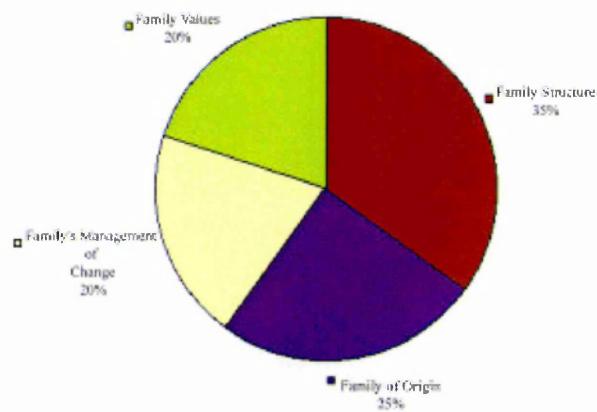


Figure E6.3. Percentages of major family themes in Ball family

---

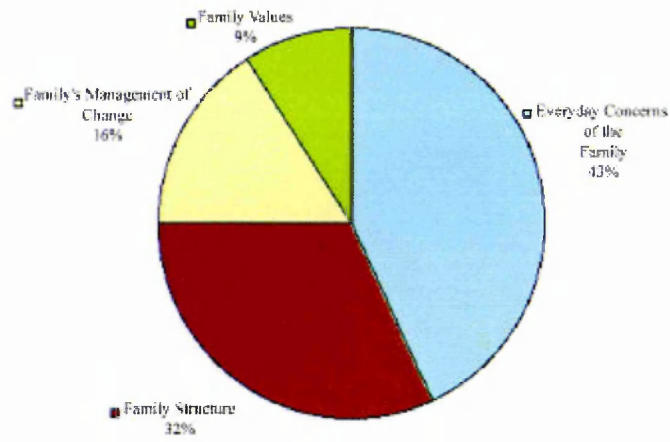


Figure E6.4. Percentages of major family themes in Whitney family

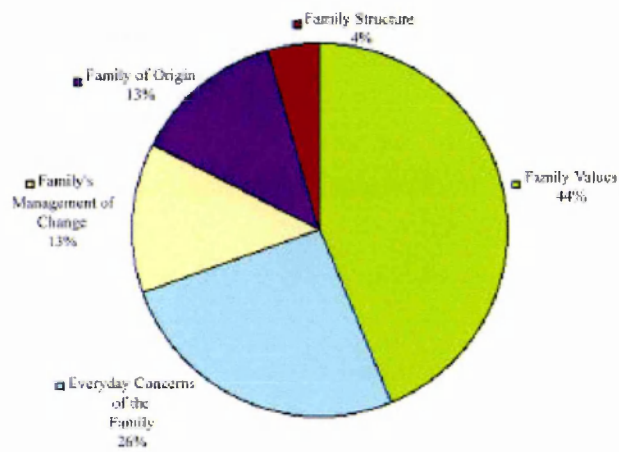


Figure E6.5. Percentages of major family themes in Rosen family

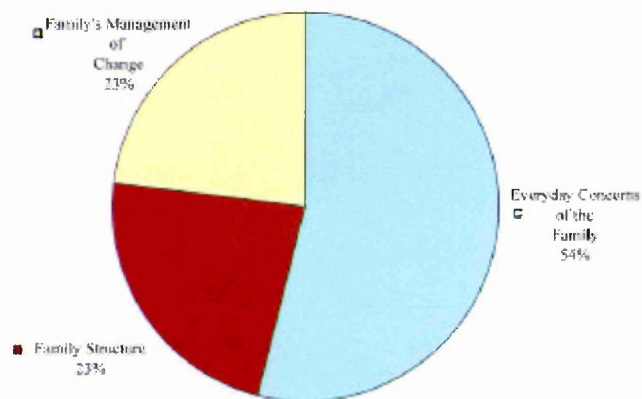


Figure E6.6. Percentages of major family themes in Williams family



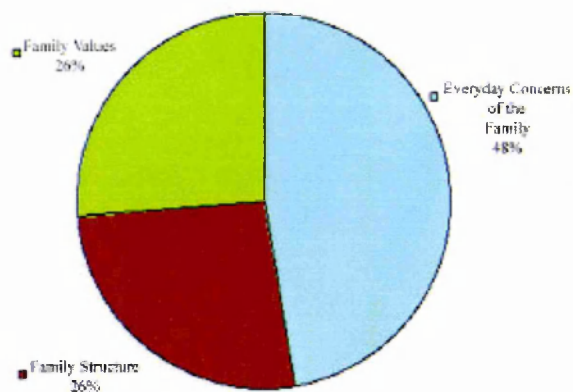


Figure E6.7. Percentages of major family themes in Badgley family

---

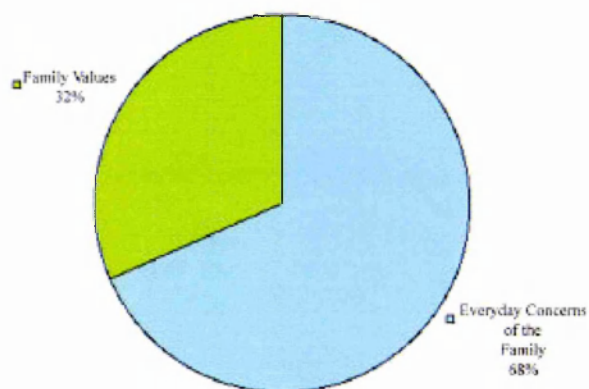


Figure E6.8. Percentages of major family themes in Samson family

---

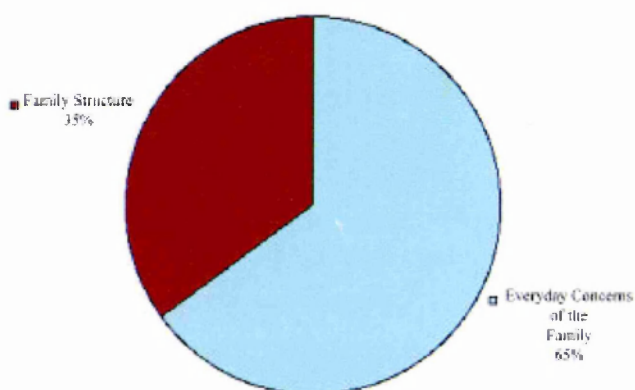


Figure E6.9. Percentages of major family themes in Langdon family

---